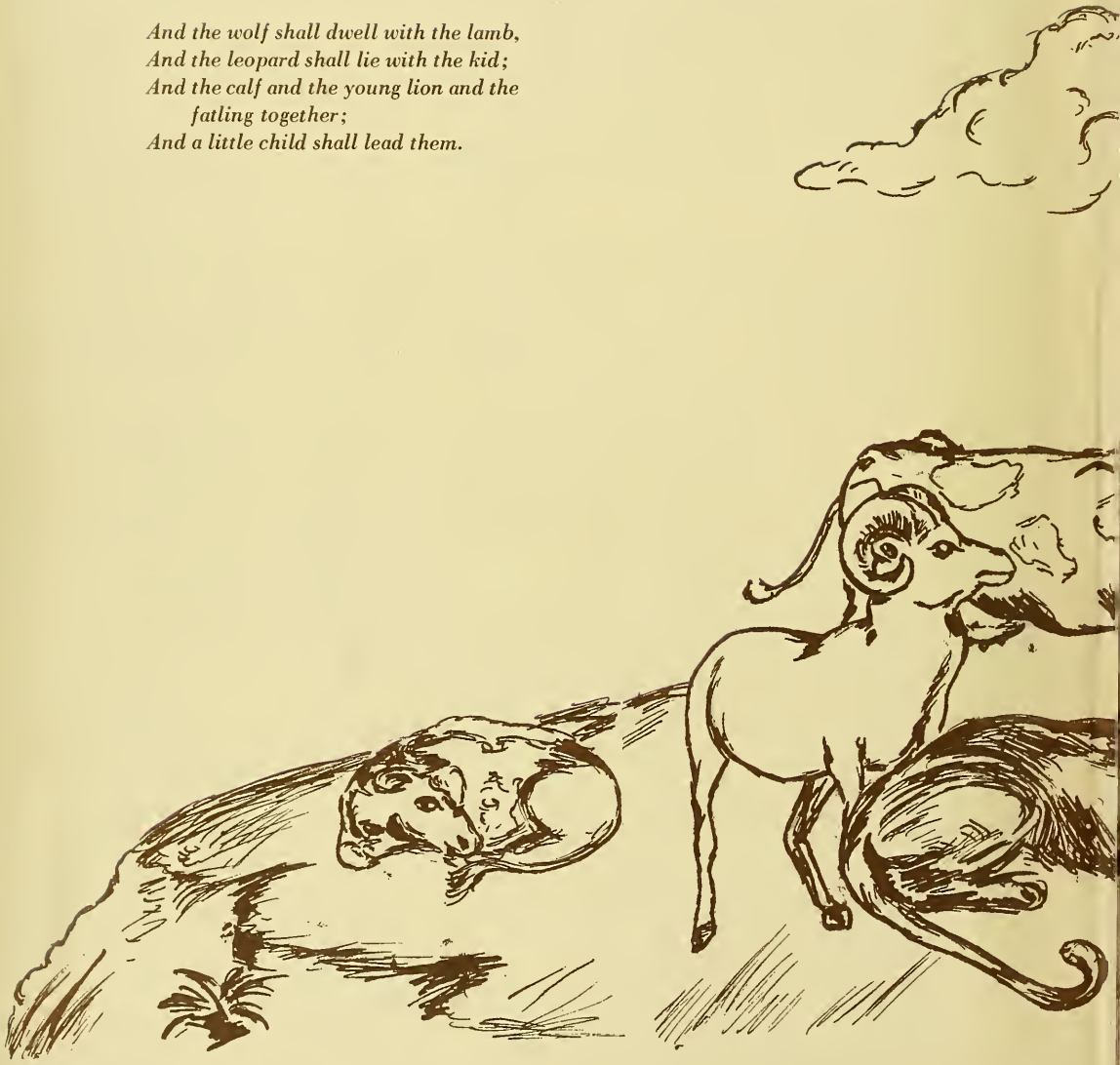
Masmid

1956

And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the
fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.



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MASMID

Yeshiva College

June 1956

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Professor Alexander Litman

To the Teacher and the Man . . .

Twenty-five years
of service
to the students
of Yeshiva College

"No iron chain, or outward force
of any kind, could ever compel the
soul of man to believe or disbelieve;
he will reign and believe by his own
indefeasible light—that judgment of his."

". . . and it shall come to pass in the end of days."

". . . And they shall beat their
swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more."

Messages from the

As you terminate your college education at Yeshiva University, I extend to you sincerest congratulations on your past achievements and wish you every success in your future endeavors. Above all, you should remember and be guided by the indigenous principles which characterize your alma mater.

The very name Yeshiva College in itself is a symbol of our purposes and philosophy. The Yeshiva stands for the concept that theory must be translated into practice, being into doing, and learning must lead to moral and ethical disciplines based upon the divine and universal law of the Torah. The teachings of the Yeshiva are primarily dedicated to the acquisition of human knowledge; to give the human mind opportunity to search the mysteries of the universe; to acquire a better understanding of the world in which we live; and to attain a greater perception of the lives and destinies of people among whom we live. A college of arts and sciences is primarily concerned with Man and his World.

The purpose of Yeshiva College is to create a unity between the Yeshiva and the College — the Yeshiva endeavoring to give a moral and spiritual purpose to the human knowledge which the student acquires in College.

I have abiding faith that you will govern your lives by the standards of the Torah and that you will consider your education as a means to a greater end — consecrated service to G-d and fellow men.

Remain a ben-ha-yeshiva in spirit and deed. I wish you all well-being and well-doing.

Sincerely,

Samuel Belkin

SAMUEL BELKIN
President

Administration

As another year passes and another class prepares to hand on the torch to its younger brothers, the occasion calls once more for a restatement of Yeshiva aims and of Yeshiva relations with students, and students about to become alumni.

It is often said that Yeshiva has a positive Jewish message to convey. This is true, but it is also necessary to understand the social significance of Yeshiva's dedication to a religious goal. This is a theme as old as Sinai but I have not seen it defined as successfully as was done by John Selden, a Seventeenth Century English erudite and man of affairs, with which I take the liberty of concluding this message. "What care I to see a man run after a sermon, if he cozens and cheats as soon as he comes home? On the other side, morality must not be without religion, for if so, it may change as I see convenience. Religion must govern it. He that has not religion to govern morality is not a dram better than my mastiff; so long as you stroke him and please him he is a good moral mastiff; but if you hurt him he will fly in your face."

It is a source of satisfaction to us at Yeshiva that the point of view represented by these remarks has proved more than a mere slogan to our students and alumni.

I wish the members of the graduating class *bon voyage* on their careers and much satisfaction in their personal lives.

Simeon L. Guterman

SIMEON L. GUTERMAN
Dean

MASMID 1956

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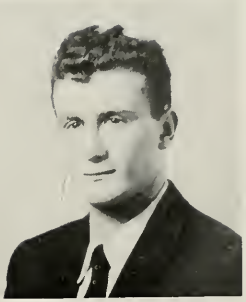

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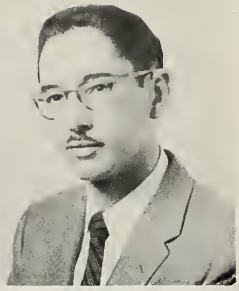

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Visiting Professor of English

Dr. Ralph Rosenberg

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Instructor in Bible
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Instructor in Bible
RABBI JOSEPH SINGER
Lecturer in Philosophy
DR. NATHAN SUSSKIND
Visiting Professor of Yiddish
DR. SOLOMON WIND
Instructor in Jewish History

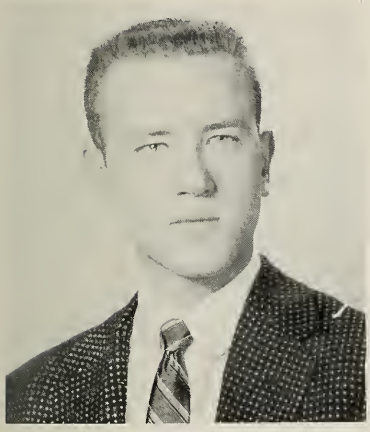
"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares . . ."

ELLIOTT ABERBACH

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Math Club; Jewish Philosophy Club

"No sooner said than done—so acts your man of worth."



STUART M. ADLER

Pre-Med *Bronx, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society

"Learning teacheth more in one year than experience in twenty."

AARON BATT

Chemistry *Hartford, Conn.*

Senior-Freshman Advisor

"Science ever has been and ever must be, the safeguard of religion."

MORTON BERGER

Psychology *Far Rockaway, N. Y.*

Fencingtime: Psychology Club: Psi Chi

"Knowledge only desires increase."

JULIUS BERMAN

Pre-Law *Hartford, Conn.*

Student Council, Vice-President; Junior Class, President; Intramural Varsity; International Relations Society, Treasurer; Co-op Staff; *Commentator*, Circulation Manager; Jewish Philosophy Society; Young Democrats

"If for anything he loved greatness, it was because therein he might exercise his goodness."

LOUIS BERNSTEIN

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Pi Delta Phi, Vice-President; Le Cercle Francaise; Co-op Staff; *Commentator* Business Staff; I.R.S. Executive Board; Young Democrats; Jewish Philosophy Society

"What is well done is done soon enough."

MARVIN BLACKMAN

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Jewish Philosophy Club; *Masmid;* I.R.S.; *Commentator*

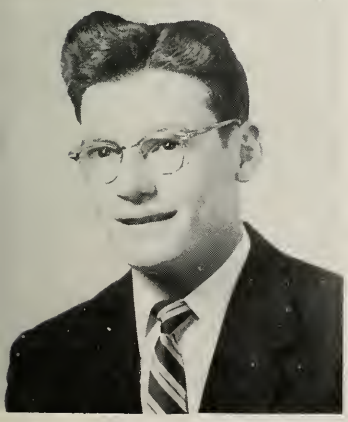
"Ability in a man is knowledge which emanates from divine light."

JOSEPH BOOK

Pre-Med *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid Typing Editor; Pre-Med Society; Hebrew Club; CO-OP; Dorm Council

"Our prank department is working overtime."



ARNOLD S. BRAMSON

Mathematics *Brookline, Mass.*

"The great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do."

JOSHUA PHILLIP CHEIFETZ

Sociology *Windsor, Canada*

Sociology Society, Vice-President; Y.U. Choral Group; Jewish Philosophy Club; Gabbai of Dorm; Eta Sigma Phi; Eranos; Psychology Club; *Ha-Melitz* Copy Editor

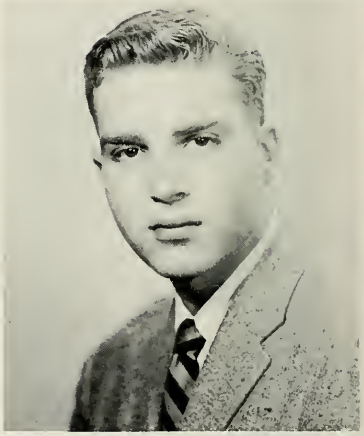
"There were giants on the earth in those days."

GERALD COHEN

Chemistry *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Tennis Team; Soccer Team; Y.U.A.A.; *Commentator;* Senior Council; CO-OP

"A friend may well be reckoned a masterpiece of nature."



SAMUEL DANISHEFSKY

Chemistry *Bayonne, N. J.*

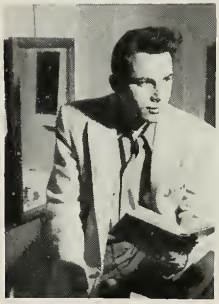
"One wise man's verdict, outweighs all the fools'."

MURRAY HERBERT DANZGER

Sociology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Activities Editor; Jewish Philosophy Society

"Though a man be wise, it is no shame for him to live and learn."



ROBERT DAVIS

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Mathematics Club; I.R.S.; Sociology Club

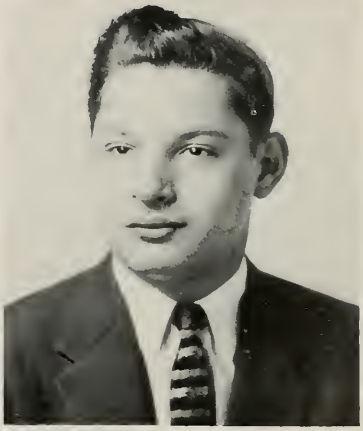
"An abridgement of all that was pleasant in man."

THEODORE DISKIND

Chemistry *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Math Club; Chemistry Club; Wrestling Team

"The best pleasure in life is the sense of discharging our duty."



AARON DOBIN

Psychology *Long Beach, N. Y.*

Orchestra; Intramural Basketball; Wrestling Team; Fencing Team; Senior Council, Chairman of Senior-Freshman Smoker

"*Why should the devil have all the good tunes.*"

IRWIN LOUIS DRYSPIEL

Sociology *Spring Valley, N. Y.*

Tennis Varsity; Orchestra; Choral Group, Sociology Club

"*And as for my hair, I'm glad it's all there, I'll be awfully sad when it goes.*"

HERZL EISENSTADT

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Wrestling Team; CO-OP; Y.U. Drive; Blood Drive; *Commentator;* Deutscher Verein, Secretary-Treasurer

"*I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beer-Sheba and cry, ''tis all barren'.*"

MARTIN ELEFANT

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Manager, Basketball Team; I.R.S.; CO-OP; Soccer Team

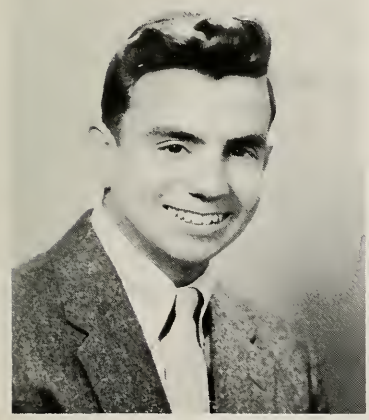
"Rejoice young man in your youth."

JACK ELLENBERG

Pre-Med *New York, N. Y.*

First Aid Instructor; Fireside Chat Committee, Assistant Chairman; Pre-Med Society

"Physicians, of all men, are most happy."



LEON ESTEROWITZ

Physics *New York, N. Y.*

Varsity Tennis Team; Math Club; French Club; Le Cercle Francais; Intramural Basketball

"Science when well digested is nothing but good sense and reason."

EMANUEL ABRAHAM FEDERBUSH

Political Science *Bronx, N. Y.*

I.R.S., President; Varsity Fencing Team; Senior - Freshman Advisor; Author of Senior Play; *Commentator* Staff; Senior Council

"The philosopher says 'the chicken is the most useful animal. You can eat it before it's born and after it's dead'."

MARTIN FINGERHUT

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Editor-in-Chief; *Commentator*, Feature Editor, Editorial Assistant; Senior Council; I.R.S.; Art Club

"Look, then, into thine heart and write!"

ASHER FINKEL

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Art Editor; French Club; Math Club; Soccer Club

"True art is reverent imitation of G-d."

STANLEY FISCHMAN

Pre-Med *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Young Democrats, Chairman Finance Committee; Pre-Med Society; N.S.A. Delegate; Executive Dorm Council

"*Knowledge is the antidote of fear.*"

EARL J. FISHHAUT

Psychology *Minneapolis, Minn.*

Masmid, Associate Photography Editor: *Commentator*, Circulation Manager: Psychology Club; Senior Varsity Show

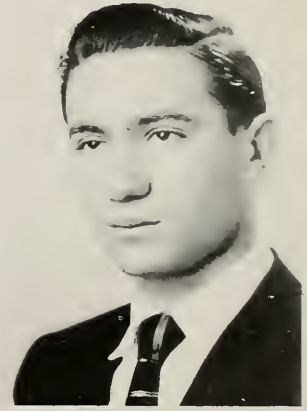
"*And there was manhood in his look.*"

PHILIP FLEISCHER

Psychology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Psychology Club

"*The best strength of man is shown in his intellectual works.*"

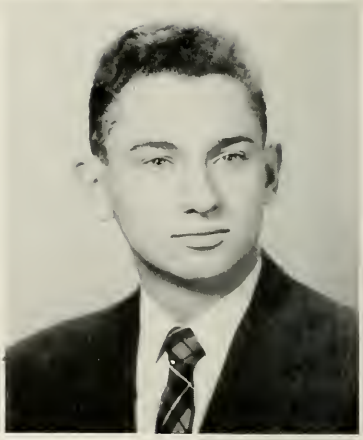


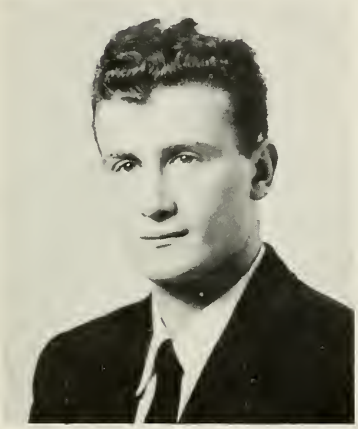
AARON FREIMAN

Chemistry *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Commentator, Sports Editor

"None but an author knows an author's cares."





GERALD FREIDLANDER

History *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Literary Editor; *Commentator*; Jewish Philosophy Club

"Blessed be he who doeth wondrous things."

HAROLD FRIEDLANDER

Psychology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Le Cercle Francais; I.R.S.

"A mind full of knowledge is a mind that never fails."

RICHARD GARBER

Psychology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Psychology Club, Vice-President; S.A.C. Club; Ice-Skating Club

"Never be afraid of what is good; the good is always the road to what is true."

NAT GELLER

English Literature *Bronx, N. Y.*

Commentator, Feature Editor; Eranos; Eta Sigma Phi; Author of Senior Play; Manager of Basketball Varsity; Senior Council

"I would rather my works were attacked, than ignored."

MARTIN M. GERBITZ

Pre-Dental *Forest Hills, N. Y.*

Pre-Medical Society, Vice-President: Biology Pre-Dental Society; Co-Chairman of S.A.C.; Publicity Committee: Blood Drive Campaign—1955, Chairman

"To be content with what we possess is the greatest and most secure of riches."

SIDNEY GOLDSTEIN

History *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Sociology Club; International Relations Society; Jewish Philosophy Society; Pre-Law Society; Wrestling Team

"A mind forever voyaging through fascinating seas of thought."

HERBERT SAMUEL GROSS

Pre-Med *Long Beach, N. Y.*

Senior Class, President; Biology Society, President; J.V. Basketball, Assistant Coach: *Commentator,* Editorial Assistant; Debating Team

"The best of healers is good cheer."

DANIEL SAMUEL HARRIS

Mathematics *Far Rockaway, N. Y.*

Varsity Tennis Team; Math Club; Y.U. Orchestra: Pre-Law Society

"The greatest success is confidence."

JOSEPH HARTMAN

Pre-Med *New York, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society; *Masmid* Staff; Manager, Varsity Basketball Team

"*We can do more good by being good than in any other way.*"

JACOB W. HELLER

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Student Council, President; Debating Society, President; I.R.S., President; Dormitory Council, President; Young Democrats, President

"*Practical politics consists in ignoring facts.*"

FRANK HELLNER

English *Philadelphia, Pa.*

S.A.C., Vice-Chairman; *Masmid*, Art Editor; Dean's Reception Committee; Used-Book Exchange, Chairman; Co-Chairman Y.U. Drive.

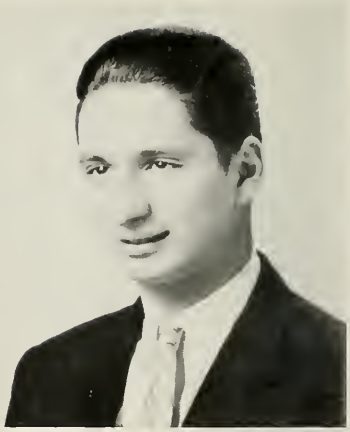
"*When love and skill work together expect a masterpiece.*"

MENAHEIM HIRMES

Mathematics *New York, N. Y.*

Math Club

"It is tranquil people who accomplish most."



ARNOLD HOFFMAN

Chemistry *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

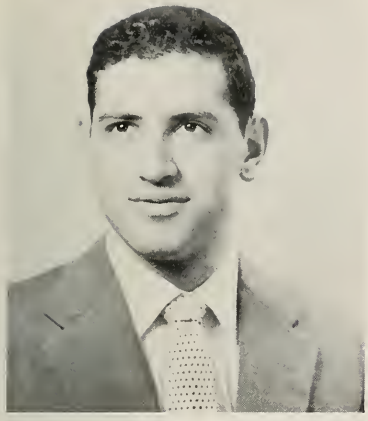
"Sincerity is the face of the soul."

SEYMOUR SOL HOFFMAN

Psychology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Psychology Club; Jewish Philosophy Club; Varsity Tennis Team, Captain; Varsity Wrestling Team, Captain

"Humor is emotional chaos remembered in tranquility."



JAKOV ZEV JAFFE

Pre-Med *Cleveland, Ohio*

Student Council, Secretary-Treasurer: Sophomore Class, President; Y.U. Choral Society; Senior-Freshman Guidance Counsellor; Pre-Med Society, Treasurer; Biology Society; Sociology Society

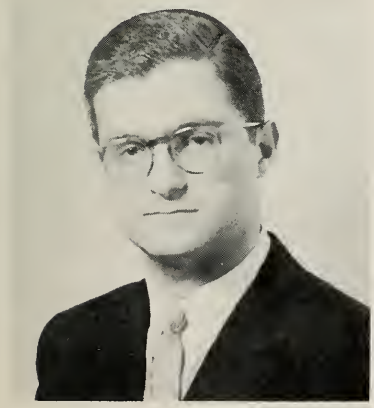
"Diplomacy is to say unpleasant things in the nicest way."

SOLOMON S. JAKOBOVITZ

History *Dublin, Ireland*

International Relations Society

"G-d is good to the Irish, but no one else is, not even the Irish."



MOSES JERUCHEM

Political Science *New York, N. Y.*

I.R.S.; Jewish Philosophy Society: Sociology Society

"Moderation is best, and to avoid all extremes."

JOSEPH KAHANE

Physics and Math *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Math Club; Tennis Squad

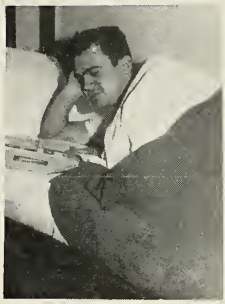
"Poet's food is love and fame."

CHAIM SZRAGA KALCHEIM

Political Science *Jerusalem, Israel*

International Relations Society

"They love their land, because it is their own."



JOSEPH SOLTE KAPLAN

Political Science *Paterson, N. J.*

Commentator, Exchange Editor; *Masmid,* Associate Editor; Debating Society, President; Dramatic Society, Vice-President; Choral Society, President; CO-OP Store, Assistant Manager; Y.U. Drive, Chairman; Varsity Fencing Team; I.R.S.; Pre-Law Society; Senior Council; Eta Sigma Phi

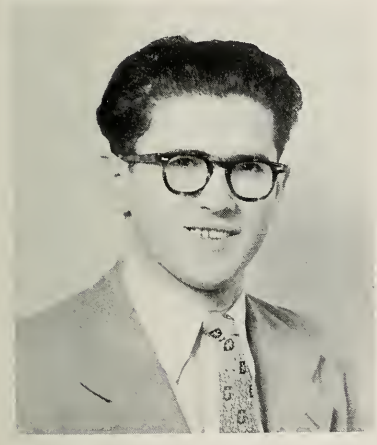
"Oratory is the art of making deep noises from the chest sound like important messages from the brain."

ERWIN KATZ

Sociology *Toledo, Ohio*

Fencing Team, Co-Captain; Sociology Society, President; International Relations Society; Psychology Club; S.O.Y. Representative; Dorm Council Representative

"One sword keeps another in the sheath."



JACOB KAUFMAN

History *Bronx, N. Y.*

Masmid; Jewish Philosophy Club; German Club

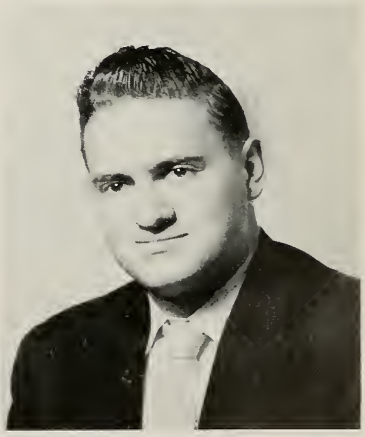
"Toil, says the proverb, is the sire of fame."

LARRY KIRSHNER

Sociology *Bronx, N. Y.*

Sociology Club; Eranos; *Commentator,* Feature Staff

"A good name is like a precious ointment."



JUDAH KLEIN

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Associate Editor-in-Chief of *Commentator;* News Editor of *Commentator;* Manager of CO-OP: I.R.S.; Young Democrats, Eranos

"*The marvellous rebellion of mankind against all signs reading 'Keep Off'.*"

JONAH C. KUPIETZKY

English *Forest Hills, N. Y.*

Varsity Basketball; Jewish Philosophical Society; Swimming Instructor.

"*Love is a many splendored thing.*"

MORRIS N. KWALBRUN

History *New Haven, Conn.*

Junior Varsity Basketball; *Commentator,* Circulation Staff; Dramatics Club; Wrestling Team

"*How now, Brown Cow.*"

MORTY D. KWESTEL

Chemistry *Forest Hills, N. Y.*

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior Classes Athletic Manager; Chemistry Society; Swimming Instructor

"After love, book collecting is the most exhilarating sport of all."

SYLVAN C. LENT

Hebrew *Hollywood, Calif.*

Jewish Philosophy Club; Advisor for Dormitory Students

"A peace above all earthly dignities, a still and quiet conscience."

HIRSH LEWITAN

Mathematics *New York, N. Y.*

Math Club; Jewish Philosophy Club; High School Dormitory Counsellor

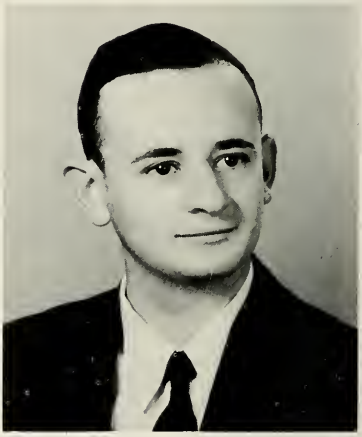
"A sublime soul can rise to all kind of greatness."

HOWARD BEHR LINZER

Psychology *New York, N. Y.*

Psi Chi Chapter, President; Psychology Club; Y.U. Drive, Chairman.

"Lost in the spiral of his conscience he detachedly takes rest."



HERMAN D. MANESSE

Hebrew *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Le Cercle Francais; Hebrew Club; Dramatics Society; Art Club

"Fortify yourself with contentment, for this is an impregnable fortress."

CLEMENT MIZRAHI

Pre-Med *Caracas, Venezuela*

Fencing; Pre-Med Society

"All life is a study."

SIDNEY D. MOSENKIS

Mathematics *Bronx, N. Y.*

Commencement Committee; Math Club; Senior-Freshman Advisor

"Study of mathematics sharpens the wit."

DAVE MOSES

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Freshman Class, President; Student Zionist Organization Representative

"A mind content both crown and kingdom is."

CHARLES NAIMAN

Physics *Toronto, Ontario*

Math Club, President; Swimming Instructor

"All men are born free but some get married."

MICHAEL NAIMAN

Chemistry *Toronto, Ontario*

"Science is vastly more stimulating to the imagination than are the Classics."

NORTON NESIS

Pre-Med *Bronx, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society; Senior Class, Vice-President

"Honor a physician with the honor due him."

HAROLD E. NEUSTADTER

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Business Manager; CO-OP; Math Club

"Never shrink from doing anything which your conscience calls you to do."

JACK NIEDELMAN

Psychology *Bronx, N. Y.*

Weight Lifting Instructor; CO-OP; Psychology Club

"Wit makes its own welcome."

JACK NUSSBAUM

Chemistry *Forest Hills, N. Y.*

Math Club

"Strength is a man's charm."

JOEL OWEN

Mathematics *Roxbury, Mass.*

Math Club

"A man he seems of cheerful yesterdays and confident tomorrows."

MARCEL PERLMAN

Psychology *Mount Vernon, N. Y.*

Sociololgy Society: Psychology Clnb; Dramatic Society; Radio Station Committee; *Masmid* Staff

"A gentleman makes no noise."

JERRY POLANSKY

Sociology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Soccer Team: Sociololgy Society

"There were giants on the earth in those days."

JERRY PRUZANSKY

Sociology *Bronx, N. Y.*

Sociology Society; Deutscher Verein; Jewish Philosophy Society

"Man goes into society not to lose, but to find himself."

ARTHUR REICH

Political Science *New York, N. Y.*

Ice Skating Club, President; I.R.S.; Ring Committee

"Flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table at a roar."

ISRAEL B. REISS

Mathematics *Baltimore, Md.*

Math Club

"Alone at night, I read my Bible more, and Euclid less."

GEORGE RIBOWSKY

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

CO-OP, Manager; Dorm Council, Vice-President; Senior-Freshman Advisor; I.R.S.; *Commentator;* Dean's Reception, Chairman; Director of Canteen

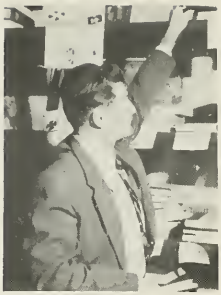
"How happy the life unembarrassed by the cares of business."

HAROLD E. RICHTMAN

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

CO-OP, Manager; Wrestling Team: *Commentator*

"When my heart is filled with praise, I can't hold back a song."



CHARLES ROSEN

Mathematics *Bronx, N. Y.*

Soccer Team; Math Club; Pre-Med Club

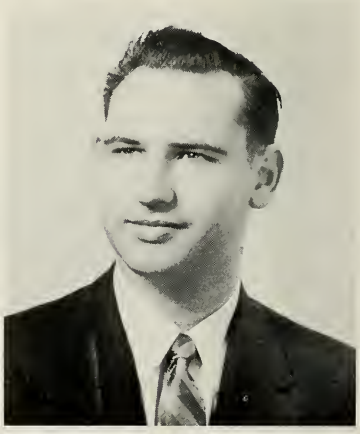
"Love truth, but pardon error."

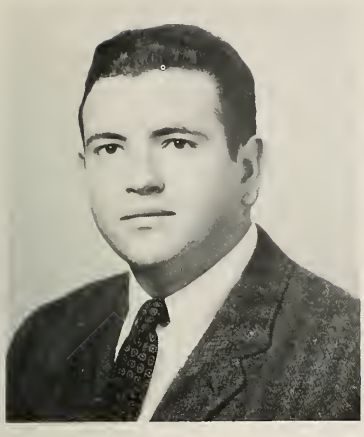
BERNARD ROSENBAUM

Psychology *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Psychology Club

"Nature designed us to be of good cheer."





STANLEY ROSENBERG

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Commentator, Business Manager; CO-OP; I.R.S.

"Pessimism when you get used to it is just as agreeable as optimism."

HASKELL ROSENBLOOM

Pre-Med *New York, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society; Dramatics Society

"Be wiser than other people but don't tell them so."

JOEL ROSENSHEIN

Psychology *Bronx, N. Y.*

Psychology Club; Choral Society; *Ha'Melitz*, Associate Editor

"Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing."

SAMUEL ROTH

Pre-Med *Bronx, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society; Math Club

"The noble mind knows the power of gentleness."

ISAAC B. SADOWSKY

Mathematics *Baltimore, Md.*

Math Club; Sociology Club; Student Dorm Advisor

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one, any day."

JOEL M. SCHECHTER

History *Bronx, N. Y.*

Wrestling Team; Sociology Society; Circulation Manager of *Commentator*; Chairman of Canvassing Committee

"Blessed is he who has found his work."

ISIDORE SCHERTZ

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Masmid, Business Staff; Soccer Team, Captain; Pre-Law Society; Choral Society; Le Cercle Francais; I.R.S.; *Commentator*, Circulation Staff

"We reckon hours and minutes to be dollars and cents."

PHILIP SCHMIDT

Pre-Med *Bronx, N. Y.*

Masmid, Photography Editor; Choral Society; CO-OP; Photography Club; S.A.C.; Pre-Med Society

"A female knee is a joint and not an entertainment(?)"

LOUIS SCHNEIDER

Pre-Med *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society

"It is not good that a man should be alone."

LEON SCHOENHOLTZ

Mathematics *Pasedena, Calif.*

Math Club: Soccer Team: Choral Society

"I would rather make my name than inherit it."

HERBERT SCHREIBER

Political Science *Bronx, N. Y.*

I.R.S.; Eranos; Student Council; *Commentator;* Eta Sigma Phi

"He profits most who serves best."

MARTIN SCHUB

Pre-Med *Bronx, N. Y.*

Junior Class, Vice-President; I.R.S.; Senior Council; *Ha'melitz*, Editor; Pre-Med Society; Biology Society.

"Nothing endures but personal qualities."

SEYMOUR SCHWARTZ

Political Science *Newark, N. J.*

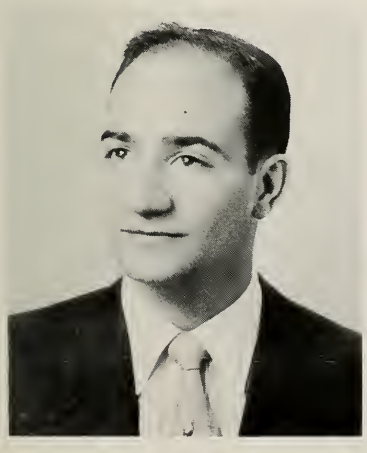
I.R.S.; Y.U. Drive; CO-OP

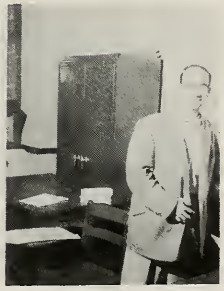
"Nothing is impossible to the man who can will, and then do."

MORTON H. SCHWARTZSTEIN

Psychology *Plainview, N. Y.*

Commentator, Circulation Manager; CO-OP; Fencing Team; Psychology Club; Sociology Club; S.O.Y.; Radio Station Committee; Special Events Committee; Publicity Committee; *Masmid* Staff; Dorm Council





STANLEY SEAVEY

English *Boston, Mass.*

Senior Play; Choral Society; Sociology Society; Hobby Club

"He worked and sung from morn till night, no lark as blithe as he."

NORMAN SINGER

Classical Languages *Bronx, N. Y.*

Eranos; Eta Sigma Phi

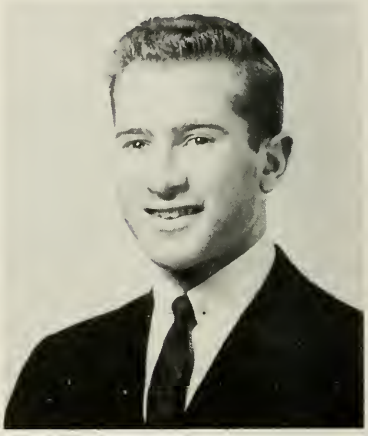
"Of all the creations of man, language is the most astounding."

DAVID STADTMAUER

Psychology *New York, N. Y.*

Masmid, Associate Activities Editor: Fencing Team

"One verse of mine may linger yet."



SEYMOUR STEINMETZ

Pre-Med *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Pre-Med Society, President; N.S.A., Chief Delegate; Swimming Instructor; S.A.C., Chairman; Soccer Team

"He who sows courtesy reaps friendship and he who plants kindness gathers love."

MORRIS STILLMAN

Chemistry *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

CO-OP, Manager; *Commentator;* Weight Lifting Instructor; Chairman of Dean's Reception

"Business? It's simple. It's other peoples' money."

ISIDORE TUCHINSKY

Political Science *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

I.R.S.; CO-OP; Wrestling Team

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

ALBERT TUCHMAN

Physics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Math Club; Art Club; Student Council; *Commentator;* Chairman Dorm Council

"Given the force, any given weight might be moved."

WOLF WALTER

Physics *Bronx, N. Y.*

CO-OP; Math Club; Israeli Society; Student Guide Book

"Ideals are like stars. You choose them as your guides and following them you will reach your destiny."

MARCEL WEBER

Political Science *Far Rockaway, N. Y.*

I.R.S. Vice-President; Eranos; Jewish Philosophy Club; Deutscher Verein

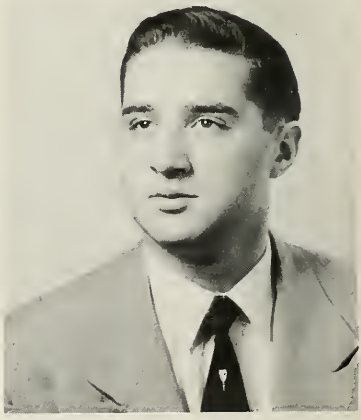
"The virtue lies in the struggle, not the prize."

JACK WEINBERG

Mathematics *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Math Club; CO-OP

"A gent who wakes up and finds himself a success has not been asleep."



EPHRAIM WEINSTEIN

Pre-Dental *Paterson, N. J.*

Pre-Med Society; Biology Club; Student Guide Book

"Great science nobly labored to increase the people's joys."

MORTON L. WERTHEIMER

Pre-Dental *Philadelphia, Pa.*

Fencing Team, Captain; Y.U. Drive, Chairman; *Commentator; Masmid,* Managing Editor; Senior Council; Pre-Med Society

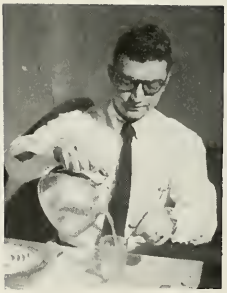
"'Tis G-D gives skill, but not without men's hand's."

STANLEY ZAHNER

English *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Chairman Y.U. Drive; Canvassing Committee

"His wife not only edited his work, but edited him."



MELVIN ZELEFSKY

Pre-Med *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Jewish Philosophy Society, President; *Commentator;* Senior Freshman Advisor; Pre-Med Society

"Don't miss the mark. Cut hard! Cut fast! Cut often!

DAVID ZWEIBEL

Political Science *Far Rockaway, N. Y.*

Commentator, Business Manager; T.I., Secretary; Dorm Council, Secretary; I.R.S.

"Politeness is the flower of humanity."

MARTIN GREENHUT

Biology *New York, N. Y.*

Commentator; Senior Varsity Show, Producer

"They conquer who believe they can."

HAROLD ZIGELMAN

Mathematics *Elizabeth, N. J.*

Commentator; Chairman of Blood Drive

"He was a little lower than the angels."

. . . neither shall they learn war anymore."

The Commentator

Official Undergraduate Newspaper of Yeshiva College

Dr. Belkin Discloses New Admission Plan

Dr. Guterman Defines College Grading Policy

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PAUL ROGOWAY
Editor-in-Chief

JUDAH H. KLEIN
Associate Editor-in-Chief

JOSEPH SILVERSTEIN
News Editor

JULIUS LANDWIRTH
Sports Editor

JACOB M. LEBOWITZ
Copy Editor

MARTIN FINGERHUT
Feature Editor—Fall Term

JOSHUA MILLER
Feature Editor—Spring Term

For the fourth time in its twenty-one years of existence, THE COMMENTATOR was awarded an All-American rating by the Associated Collegiate Press.

Continuing in its capacity as the official voice of the Yeshiva College student body, THE COMMENTATOR devoted its news columns to complete coverage of the many activities in and around Yeshiva.

A statement by Dean Guterman in regard to college grading policy in issue No. 2 created wide student interest. Announcement of the resignation of Dr. Alexander Freed, the opening and dedication of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, interviews with new faculty members and the appointment of a Religious Guidance Committee were other highlights in the fall issues.

Spring issues included news of a new college admissions plan, a T.I.-R.I.E.T.S. merger on the high school level and the raise in dormitory and tuition fees.

Clubs received the most adequate coverage ever in a larger and more frequently appearing "Club Notes" column.

Through its editorial columns, THE COMMENTATOR continued to campaign for improvements at Yeshiva, guided by a policy of constructive criticism.

Several times during the year, THE COMMENTATOR editorial columns saw fit to comment on situations outside of the immediate scope of Yeshiva. Secretary of State Dulles, and United States foreign policy in regard to Israel, were criticized strongly, and Miss Autherine Lucy's fight against segregation in the South was firmly supported.

Serving for the fifth year under alumni advisorship, THE COMMENTATOR reiterated its stand that "the present system could be accepted only as the final measure of administration association with THE COMMENTATOR, and not as the initial step on the road to censorship.

Feature columns achieved a balance between humorous and more serious articles of student interest.

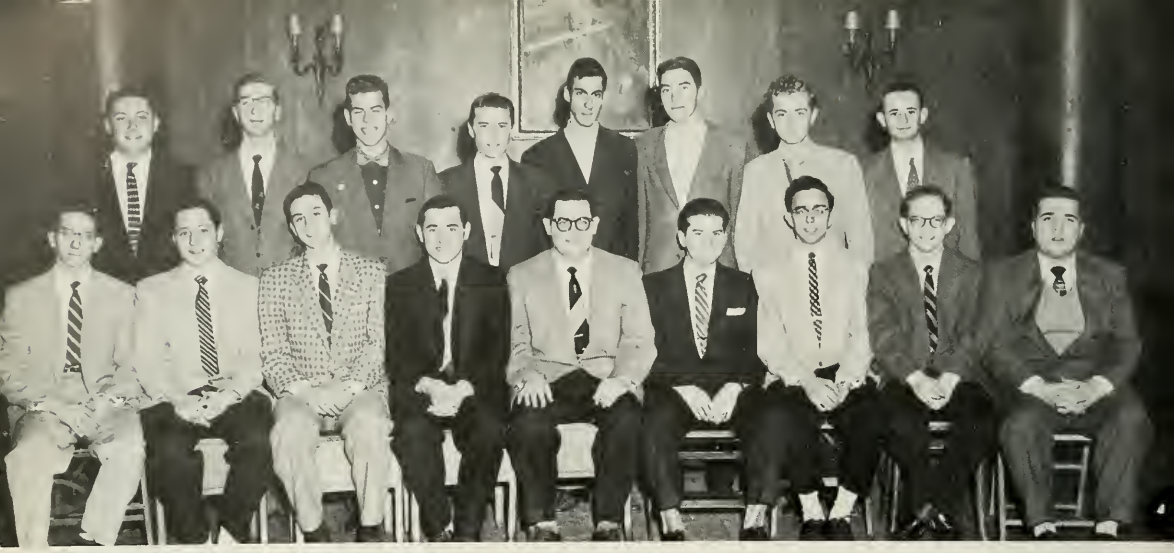
Special features were devoted to Ten Years of Growth of Yeshiva, and the Rabbinical Council of America controversy.

THE COMMENTATOR added to the Purim spirit with a recounting of Dr. S. L. Butterman's four-volume trilogy on the United Seminary of America. Dr. Samuel Beacon's reaction to the history, a volume on the segregation problem of Miss Atalia Loosey, and a "Simple Simon Says" column were features of the issue.

STANLEY ROSENBERG
Business Manager

JOSEF E. FISCHER
Managing Editor—Fall Term

JOEL KAPLAN
Managing Editor—Spring Term



Music could be heard resounding throughout the dorm halls at all hours of the night this year. CO-OP had put on sale a large selection of classical, Israeli and cantorial records which were quickly gobbled up by the culturally starved students.

Pesach items, greeting cards, sox and ties, were sold for the first time at CO-OP, as some of the smaller services for the convenience of the students.

As usual, breakfast and lunch were eaten in the CO-OP canteen. A hot chocolate and coffee machine was added to the milk, juice and cake machines, to add further competition to the cafeteria. Soda, candy, cigarettes and orange-drink dispensers for midnight snacks were also handy.

The high-brows were able to find a wider selection of scholarly publications to satisfy their taste. Bookbinding kits were added so that students could bind their paperback books for prolonged use. For the more prosperous, a nearly complete selection of Modern Library books was available, as well as a large number of books of Jewish interest.

The innovators of the new features were the managers for the year, Morris Stillman '56 and Harold Richtman '56.

CO-OP

Psychology Club

The Psychology Club this year, made a comprehensive study of Stern and Yeshiva Colleges, through the means of a questionnaire distributed in both schools. Results are being correlated and are expected by the end of this term.

In addition, several interesting lectures were sponsored by the Club as well as the beginning of the difficult task of classifying and indexing all books of educational and psychological interest in the College library. This has been acclaimed as one of the greatest contributions of any club to the betterment of Yeshiva.

Officers are: David Hammer '57, president; Richard Garber '56, vice-president, and Bernard Rothman '58, secretary.

Throughout the years, the Sociological Society has been one of the foremost clubs at Yeshiva University. When the Student Council instituted its Club Award in 1954, the society was presented with the citation. Last year the Sociological Society again won this award, and they hope to win it again this year.

The purpose of the society has been not only to complement textbook sociology, but also to provide informative and interesting programs of sociological import for the entire student body. This year's specific topic has been "The work of organizations serving the American Jewish Community and the problems facing them." In connection with this aim, representatives of some of these organizations were invited to speak before the society.

Under the able leadership of Erwin Katz, Josh Cheifetz, and Joseph Book, a sister club has been established in the Stern College for Women, in conjunction with the Psych Club.

Sociology Society

Pre-Law Society

The Pre-Law Society is something new at Yeshiva. It was founded in the Spring term of '55 by Herbert Charney and Joseph Chervin, who became its first president and vice-president respectively.

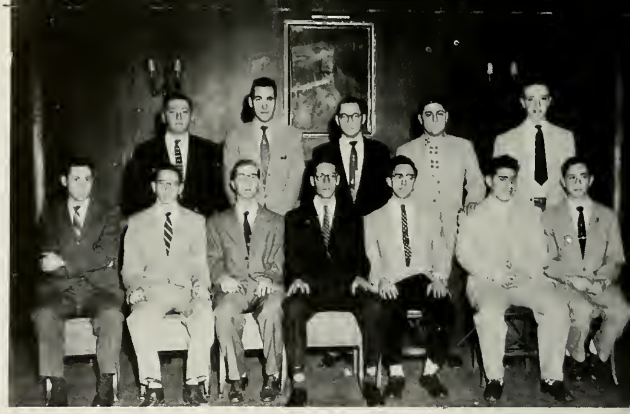
Though it is the youngest society in the school, it is one of the most active. This society's activities are both precedent breaking and varied. The members visited District Attorney Silver's office and sat in on an evening session of the General Court.

Guest speakers at lectures included such a well known person as Prof. J. P. Gifford, Assistant Dean of Columbia University Law School. Alumni of Yeshiva now attending law schools also lectured.

The society has acquired a special section in the Pollack Library for their use, and is now in the process of obtaining catalogues and applications from major law schools throughout the country.

Activities include speakers, practicing different phases of law, alumni in law schools, day visits to the General Court, and films from the American Bar Association.

The Pre-Law Society is growing rapidly and has already taken its place with the older and better established societies at Yeshiva.



Chess Club

The legend of Yeshiva's chess team is one that is as little known as it is spectacular. Such names as Yanofsky, Steinberg and Rosen, which once appeared in the columns of the New York Times as they lead Yeshiva through victorious intercollegiate championships, are hardly ever heard at YU now. The spirit they left behind in the form of the YU chess team and club, however, is witness to the fact that they have not been forgotten.

Although the team did not compete this year, Yeshiva is still considered prominently in intercollegiate chess circles. No less a person than Grand Master Samuel Reshevsky has shown interest in the new team Yeshiva is grooming for next year.

Louis Taubenblatt, '57, president of the club and captain of the team, is confident that Yeshiva will regain its former standing in intercollegiate chess next season.

Pre-Medical Society

One of the functions of the Pre-Medical Society is to aid the student in the field of his pre-medical studies.

Guidance assistance has been given to the Society by Dr. Shelly Saphire and Dr. Eli Levine both of Yeshiva.

Dr. Johnson of Syracuse Medical School has spent an evening with the Society to acquaint the members with his medical school. A chapter of Alpha Epsilon Delta Pre-Medical honorary fraternity is in the process of being established here at Yeshiva.

This past year, the activities of the Society were headed by Seymour Steinmetz '56, president; Martin Gerbitz '56, vice-president, and Raphael Levine '57, secretary-treasurer.

Biology Society

The Biology Club supplements Biology courses through films, displays, lectures and discussions on various related topics.

The club presented two displays during the fall semester. One display depicted man's struggle for existence and how he survived. The second display called "The Virus" advanced the idea that the Virus may be the intermediate step in the evolution of the inanimate to the animate.

The club was led this year by Jay Rothschild '57.

Chemistry Society

The Chemistry Society was founded in the Fall Term, and the honor of becoming its first president was accorded to Reuben Rudman. It was created with four principle functions in mind: 1) To heighten the interest of the students in chemistry; 2) To help broaden their knowledge of chemistry and supplement their courses: 3) To introduce the students to current research and industrial activity; 4) To aid the students in the achievement of their professional goals in the field of chemistry.

It has had both guest speakers and speakers from within its ranks. The guest speakers, mostly from among the graduates of YU, have discussed topics in advanced chemistry, and also problems of graduate school. The undergraduates also present lectures. They are thereby introduced to current problems in chemistry, and they also get a chance to learn the basic techniques of library research in a specialized field.

This term the club has planned a series of lectures to be given by its members, interspersed with a few guest speakers. The topics cover different phases of technical material, popularization of chemistry, and history of chemistry.

Mathematics Society

The purpose of the Math Club was to discuss topics of interest to students of Math which were not part of the College curriculum.

Under the leadership of their president, Charles Naiman '56, such diverse topics as diaphontic equations, Probability, and the Gregorian and Jewish calendars were discussed.

Alumni of Yeshiva now studying physics, math and engineering at different graduate schools discussed the opportunities which each offers.

Choral Society

The Choral Society this year had the privilege of introducing an innovation in the collegiate atmosphere at Yeshiva. The Dean's Reception had as its finale the premiere of the Alma Mater by the Choral Society, garbed in cap and gown.

The event was unique in the history of the Society as well as that of the College in that Joshua Miller '57, vice-president, taught the beautiful air, which was written and composed by Joel Schreiber '57, to the Society, and then conducted the Chorus at the reception marking the first time that a member of the student body conducted the Chorus at a public affair.

The words of the Alma Mater were first read to the audience by Joseph Kaplan '56 and then rendered in song by the Chorus, after which the entire audience rose and sang "Golden Domes."

Dramatics Society

The Dramatics Society infused new life into the Dean's reception this year. Under its sponsorship a play was presented by each class. The classes for the newly instituted "Dr. Simeon L. Guterman Award" for the best presentation.

The Juniors opened the evening with their presentation, a musical comedy entitled "Under Where?" This play told the story of a union suit factory called "You Shiver." Louis Wohl '57, president of the Society appeared in the play wearing "just *gatkes*."

This act of bravery plus some singing and dancing won the award for the Junior class.

It was also under the sponsorship of the Society that Yeshiva inaugurated an alma mater which was sung by the Chorus under the direction of Josh Miller '57. Music and lyrics were written by Joel Schreiber '57.

Debating Society

An expansion of its tour program highlighted the Debating Society this year. Under the direction of its president Joseph Kaplan, and in conjunction with the Community Service Division of Yeshiva, a Chicago tour was added to the usual tours to Upstate New York, Boston, Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

In the Metropolitan area the Society achieved a noteworthy success debating Columbia on the topic: "Resolved: That the U. S. Should Send Defensive Arms to Israel."

The team compiled a record of 25 wins and only 10 losses in debating the national topic.

I.R.S.

The International Relations Society attempts to promote understanding of international problems. To achieve this goal, the Society this year, conducted an intense series of lectures, discussions, debates and tours. The critical situation in the Middle East received particular attention. Israeli Consul Cecil Hyman spoke on this topic at Yeshiva under the sponsorship of I.R.S.

Marcel Weber '56 succeeded Emanuel Federbush '56 as president when the latter resigned to produce the Senior Varsity Show.

Jewish Philosophy Society

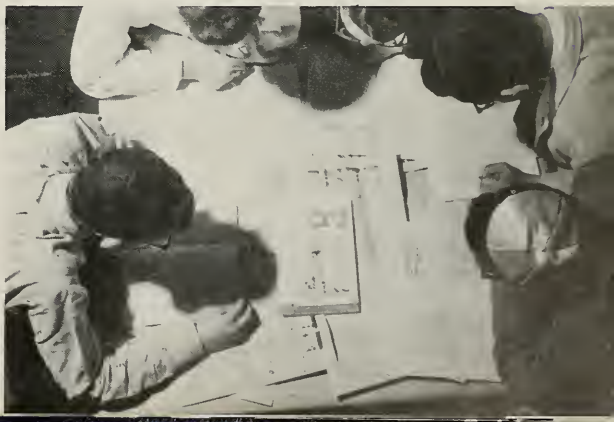
The Jewish Philosophical Society brings the student body into contact with scholars in Jewish thought and philosophy. During the four years of its existence, the society has played a role in Yeshiva life well beyond the highest hopes of its founders.

This year four areas for discussion were emphasized by Alvin Bobroff, president of the society. They were: 1) Science and religion; 2) Medieval Jewish philosophers; 3) Jewish influence on world literature and thought; 4) Existentialism and Jewish philosophy. Outstanding scholars discussed different aspects of these topics.

Other controverial areas of Jewish thought were also examined. Dr. Menahem Breyer lectured on the Dead Sea Scrolls. This topic so aroused the interest of the student body, that over 200 students attended the lecture. This society has a large following, and is watched with keen interest by the entire student body.

This year saw the revitalization of the *Chug Ivri* at Yeshiva College, a student group devoted to the spread of Hebrew culture and the Hebrew Language. The *Chug* devoted itself to creating a Hebrew atmosphere, where college students could get together for free and informal discussions, and keep abreast of the latest developments in matters pertaining to the Jewish State, Zionism, and other topics vital to a complete Jewish existence.

Towards these ends, several prominent speakers were invited to address the club, among them a lieutenant in the Israeli Army who depicted the role of the army in integrating the new immigrants. Leaders of the *Chug* are Shlomo Feder '57, and Sidney Goldstein '56, president and vice-president, respectively.



Le Cercle Francais

Le Cercle Francais and Alpha Omega chapter of the Pi Delta Phi again, as in the past, undertook this year to further French culture at YU under the guidance of Prof. Sidney D. Braun, its faculty adviser.

RACONTER, the club's publication, presented to the students articles of French interest. FLAMBEAU, Yeshiva's nationally distributed literary magazine, won the "Alliance" award as the best college publication in the French language.

The program of the Alpha Omega chapter of Pi Delta Phi included a special 1956 initiation meeting, and such eminent speakers as Prof. Habert, editor of France-Amerique who spoke on the "French Press in America," and Prof. Guicharnand of Yale. The group also attended the American premiere performance of The Comedie Francaise production of Moliere's "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," upon which Prof. Braun lectured. Besides a group theater party for "Les Lettres de Mon Moulin," a full length feature film was shown at Yeshiva at the last social gathering of the year.

Eranos

Eranos, the classical society of Yeshiva, endeavors to bring its members closer to the realization of the vast store of human knowledge and experience which is encompassed within the Classical world.

The comparison between the two driving forces of the western world, the Roman-Graeco culture and the ethical Jewish spirit, is also a leading objective of the Society. This is in line with the achievement of a better understanding of the moral and spiritual contradictions of our age.

In a series of lectures Eranos explored the problems, views and differences between leading Jewish groups during Graeco-Roman times. They also heard a talk by Dr. Feldman on "The Greek Influence on the Talmud."

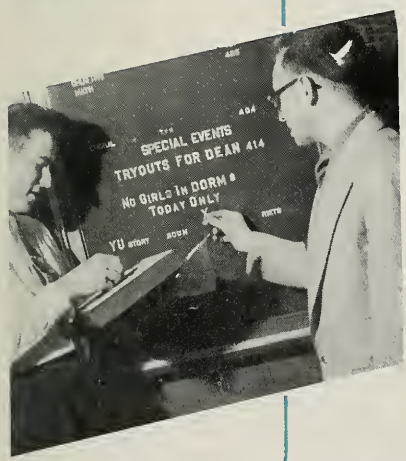
Hobby Club

Under the banner motto "Don't hide your talent in a bucket; bring it to life," Morris Narushinsky led the Hobby Club in the '55-'56 school year.

The abilities and hobbies of the individual members were improved to the point that some of its members are now accomplished entertainers.

Members of the club performed at charity functions, as well as at hospitals and old age homes. They have also entertained at Women's Auxiliary functions of YU and at the Young Israel of Tremont.

The club is now exploring new media of education through entertainment and play.



S.A.C.

The Student Activities Committee of the Student Council, is in charge of Council publicity. It is the function of S.A.C. to coordinate the activities of the clubs at Yeshiva which meet club hour every Thursday afternoon at 2:30.

A total of 20 clubs and societies functioned this year. Chemistry, Chug Ivri, Hobby and Zionist Clubs were four newcomers. In addition there were three honorary scholastic fraternities which are also supervised by S.A.C. Prospects of adding two new honorary fraternities by next September are bright.

S.A.C. was headed by Seymour Steinmetz '56, chairman, and Allan Scher '57, co-chairman.

Student Council

Expansion of activity, cooperation and improved service to the student body best describe the work of Student Council.

Many of our goals have already been reached, other long-range projects have been initiated by Council and await completion. Student-administration cooperation facilitated the institution of several new projects and improvement of other areas of activity, while Student Council in turn sponsored and designed many projects to aid the faculty and administration in the work, in the interest of improving the University's program.

The work of the religious guidance program and the Religious Guidance lecture series which were both instituted at Council's request have made much progress with Council's cooperation. The Senior-Freshman Guidance Committee assisted and supplemented the work of the Guidance Department. It also participated in the orientation of Freshmen during freshman orientation week which was held before the start of school. The Library Committee helped to improve the University's library service, and, as in previous years, Student Council produced the Dean's Reception, an administration sponsored affair, which this year achieved unparalleled success. It featured the presentation of class plays and the introduction of the official Yeshiva College alma mater, composed under the auspices of Council.

Student Council Medical Committee recommended and obtained improved medical service, and Council's recommendation for an health insurance program awaits administration approval. As part of the improvement in health service this year, Council organized and maintained an emergency car brigade to help secure immediate medical attention in emergencies.

The Curriculum Committee is conducting an evaluation of the College Curriculum based on student reaction and desires. The report when completed will recommend Curriculum improvements in many areas. Student Council has been instrumental in securing the introduction to the Curriculum of the new "Fundamentals of Religion" course which will be offered next year.

The Student Council Building Repair Committee and its Cleanup Campaign Sub-committee obtained various environmental improvements. The food and cleanliness in the cafeterias were improved at the requests of the Food Committee.

Student Council was also instrumental in satisfactorily resolving issues in certain areas where there were varying degrees of disagreement with the Administration. Among these problems arose: Scheduling of courses and closing of sections in the language and science departments: attempts to stifle student expression and activity; Admissions policy for the College; programming during Club Hour; arbitrary disciplinary action; and finally, the problems of individual students in which Council helped the students in their negotiation with the administration.

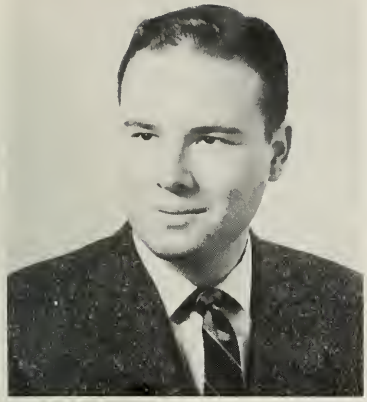
There was much student activity on the club level this year. In addition to the 16 clubs already functioning several new clubs and honorary-fraternities were added. Among them was the Chug Ivri, Zionist, Chemistry and Hobby clubs. Club activity under S.A.C. was better organized and more effective this year, owing to reorganization, efficient management, and installation of new bulletin boards. Student Council Club Hour has been proven successful once again.

The cooperative stores continued to expand their services. The main store open for 5 hours daily added a record and greeting card department, and expanded the appliance and book departments. A coffee machine was added to the canteen whose machines provide the student body with convenient 24 hour service.

Commentator was published on a bi-weekly basis. The newspaper appeared 15 times once again. Student Council in addition sponsored a varsity show featuring a 2-hour operetta presented by the senior class, started work on a radio station, facilitated travel to basketball games by offering free bus service, revived "You, the Student" under a new format, organized art, typing, and public relations squad, and improved Senior Rings, and the service award program.

Other activities of Student Council which were maintained once again were the Yeshiva University Drive for Charities, the Blood Drive, the Used-Book Exchange, Fireside Chats, Freshman-Senior Smoker and Alumni Committees.

The brightest side of extra-curricular program at Yeshiva this year was the appearance of a school spirit which permeated all areas of activity. Its manifestation is indicative of the enlivened interest of the student body in their student government and student activities at Yeshiva College, and their sincere dedication to the continued improvement of Yeshiva College — the desire of Yeshiva College Student Council.



JACOB HELLER
President

SENIOR CLASS
Herbert Gross, *President*
Norton Nesis, *Vice-President*
Herbert Schreiber, *Delegate-at-Large*

JUNIOR CLASS
Josef Fischer, *President*
Louis Wohl, *Vice-President*
Herbert Charney, *Delegate-at-Large*

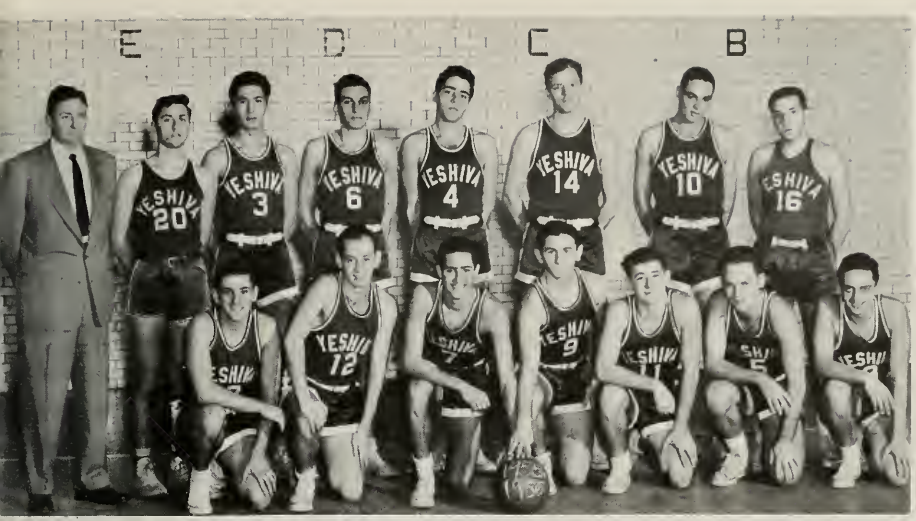
SOPHOMORE CLASS
Leonard Shapiro, *President*
Joseph Chervin, *Vice-President*
Abraham Becker, *Delegate-at-Large*

FRESHMAN CLASS
Joshua Gershon, *President*
Chaim Fleishman, *Vice-President*
Yehuda Sorcher, *Delegate-at-Large*

JULIUS BERMAN
Vice-President

NATHAN LEWIN
Secretary-Treasurer

13
50

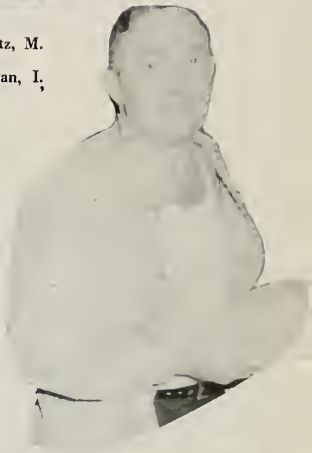


BASKETBALL VARSITY

Front row: B. Hochdorf, H. Schlussel, A. Helfer, M. Krieger, I. Steinmetz, M. Teicher, N. Meiselman.
Top row: Coach "Red" Sarachek, Z. Englard, L. Berkstein, D. Mehlman, I. Listowsky, A. Sodden, I. Blumenreich, H. Bursky.

Basketball

The 1955-56 athletic season at Yeshiva saw the Mighty Mites soar with success to an all time high, backed by keen student spirit. Coach Bernie Sarachek and his hoopsters took off like a streak, starting with the opening Norman Palefski Memorial Game again Bridgeport, and took five straight before running into the fabulous St. Francis Terriers. The televised ball game was the season's highlight, and won



for Yeshiva many new metropolitan area fans as "Red' Blumenreich and "Hot Hands" Schlussel led the Mites in a gallant fight. Everything clicked for the cagers as they knocked off the city teams: Hunter, Queens and Brooklyn, and upset highly touted Adelphi. Others that fell before the Yeshiva drive included Quinnipiac, King's Point, and Toronto, each with its own sensational story. Bulwarks of the club were the inimitable "Red" Blumenreich and mighty Abe "Bam" Sodden, whose combination of scoring and rebounding kept the Mites in control of many a ball game. "Red," the first Yeshiva ballplayer to be elected to the All-Metropolitan team, wrote his own page in Yeshiva basketball history by his phenomenal feat of icily scoring five do-or-die points in the closing seconds of the Kings Point game.

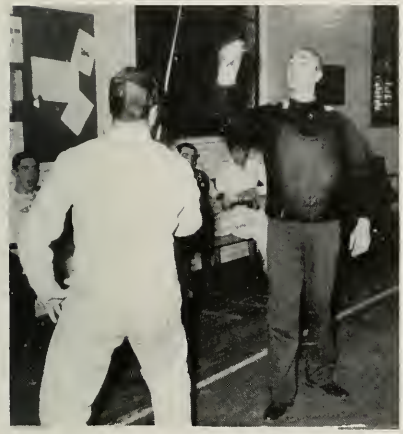
The 16-2 season record of the Mites, best in Yeshiva's history, was climaxed by a two point victory over Brooklyn College.

How The Ball Bounced

	G	*FG*	*FA*	*F*	*FP*	*TP*	*A*	*PF*
Blumenreich	18	177	156	92	.589	446	24.7	51
Sodden	18	115	132	81	.614	311	17.3	50
Schlussel	18	80	53	31	.585	191	10.5	36
Teicher	18	54	48	25	.521	133	7.4	51
Helfer	18	50	56	31	.554	131	7.3	49
Steinmetz	16	12	28	17	.607	41	2.6	31
Mehlman	8	9	11	1	.091	19	2.1	17
Listowsky	6	4	2	2	1.000	10	1.7	7
Hochdorf	13	5	14	8	.571	18	1.5	10
Team totals		506	502	290	.577	1,302	72.33	313

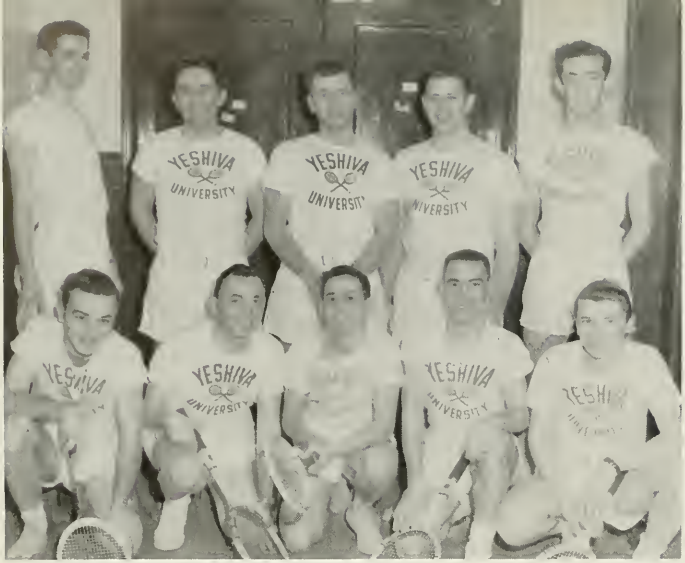
G—games, FG—field goals, FA—foul attempts, F—foul shots made, FP—foul shooting percentage, TP—total points scored, A—per game average, PF—personal fouls committed.

Fencing

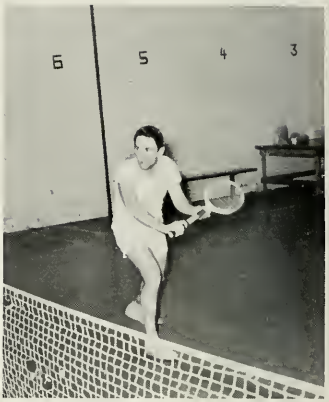


FENCING VARSITY
Bottom row: D. Stadtmauer, M. Wertheimer, J. Chinitz, P. Peyser.
Top row: P. Kolker, A. Greenspan, D. Chill, J. Kaplan, J. Danzger, L. Lehrer, J. Fischer, A. Scher.

Yeshiva's fencers continued to prove their prowess as they attained a 10-1 mark for the second successive year. Tutored by mentor Art Tauber and sparked by Capt. Morty Wertheimer, Danny Chill, who went on to the semi-finals of the Intermediate Fencing Tournament, Joe Fischer, and the scrappy sabre trio—Peyser, Danzger and Co-Captain Erwin Katz—the foilers romped through their schedule. It took the national fencing champs, Columbia, to put the skids on the fast moving squad. The three sabre aces hit a 22-7 seasonal mark each, which made them pretty tough to beat. Knocking off Drew University, the fencers were toasted by the losers as the first team ever to beat them twice in a row. This makes another year in which Yeshiva has turned out a squad of spirited masters of the strip, thanks to their superb coaching.



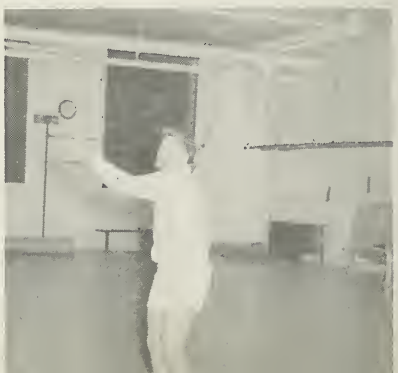
TENNIS VARSITY
Bottom row: Z. Schrader, P. Rogoway, H. Hoffman, I. Aaronson, M. Sadwin.
Top row: D. Harris, S. Hoffman, J. Quint, S. Schreiber, B. Levin.



Tennis

This year marked the second year of Yeshiva tennis competition in the Metropolitan Tennis Conference and the Blue and White managed to compile another fine record. Despite the loss of graduated number one man Dave Lifshutz, the squad was able to make use of young newcomers along with Captain Herbie Hoffman to round out a fine team. Playing the home matches at Riverview Courts, the Yeshiva racquetmen faced such top notch opponents this year as Army, Iona and Hunter.

Seymour Hoffman, number four man, was awarded The Commentator award in tennis for his fine play and sportsmanship during the season.



Wrestling

For the first time in Yeshiva history, a Blue and White wrestling team was organized on an intercollegiate level. Coached by pro wrestler Joe Cassius, the grapplers put three matches on their debut schedule, winning one. Yeshiva students were presented with a thrilling performance as the wrestlers took on Rutgers of Newark in the YU gym and won the first Yeshiva intercollegiate match.

Intramurals took on a new light this year as Yeshiva was invited to participate in the St. Peter Intercollegiate Tournament. After completing an extensive intramural basketball circuit run by school Athletic Manager Shelly Chwat, the senior class emerged champs and went on to represent Yeshiva in the tourney.

Soccer and swimming were two other organized athletic activities at Yeshiva, each showing signs of developing into a major varsity sport. The soccer team, now in its second year of limited competition, played one match against Columbia and expects to expand its schedule next year.

Class History

A class history in theory should deal in major part with the events that occurred during its four years of college. If theory would be turned into practice, the history and achievements of the Class of '56 would be summed up in a few short paragraphs. Through the means of exaggeration and turning a class history into a college history, we have managed to compile what you find on the succeeding pages. Any resemblance between this and the actual history of the Class of '56 is pure fantasy on the part of the reader.

Freshman Year

So this is the land of synthesis and co-existence; it almost looks like any other school. Of course there are little differences, like gymnasiums with ceilings 16 feet high and a swimming pool eight blocks away, but after all it's little things like this that make a college unique, and it is such uniqueness that binds members of the same school together.

It was quite apparent from the start that our class was destined to be a trail-blazer. Not content with the usual system of Freshman Orientation in which we learned such valuable facts as that the building is located in New York City, and that it was founded in a hovel on the East Side, the Administration decided that we were to be tested on these tidbits of information. Those who failed the test in the credit-less course would have to pay a fee for a make-up exam.

The Commentator in its first issue welcomed us to the College and told us how fortunate we were to have chosen Yeshiva, a veritable haven of friendship and goodwill. Right underneath, there was a scathing editorial about censorship of Commentator and how it would not be tolerated. So this, we concluded, was what they meant by co-existence!

For the first few weeks, this was the only observation we had time for. It seemed they had a form to be filled out for everything conceivable, and a few for those that weren't.

It appeared that for every Freshman class that entered, one instructor was graduated. During our Freshman year a Mr. Maier, Instructor in German, was liberated. Somehow connected with this was the peculiar announcement that all three-credit courses had to meet three times a week, except for those that didn't. Both of these policies were strongly objected to by the Student Council who showed once and for all that they were not to be tampered with, by passing a resolution condemning the above acts. This bold act was the result of a meeting anonymously announced by the circulation of unsigned handbills throughout the building. In a meeting held soon after between Dean Isaacs and Student Council, matters were discussed, and the Student Council was "convinced" that the Administration was correct.

So this, we concluded, is what is meant by synthesis.

Towards the end of the first semester we had the Senior-Frosh smoke, or at least we think we did. Everytime one of us would fight his way towards the beer and free cigarettes, a groups of seniors would intercept us and demand proof that we were freshmen. By the end of the evening it was a sorry lot of Freshies who had to help carry the giggling intoxicated Seniors back to their dorm rooms.

As in all election years, the boys at Yeshiva took an active interest in the forthcoming election and, through a poll taken, it was found that the student body preferred Stevenson 16-1 over President Eisenhower.

Other wishful thinking was exhibited in the expectation of an early solution of what was called the "Cafeteria Situation." An outside caterer was called in and he expressed the feeling that while the food was of good quality, it had no "eye appeal." The statement issued by the caterer made no mention as to whether he actually tasted the food or paid the prices for them.

In the next to last issue, The Commentator came out with an 18 page anniversary edition, denoting the twenty-fifth anniversary of Yeshiva College. The magnificence of the entire project almost outshone the fact that Marty Greenhut was the first of our class to make the Commie Editorial Board as News Editor.

We had just been in the school for one year when Dean Isaacs resigned. Everyone began to point accusing fingers at us, but we looked as innocent as only a Freshman could.

And so, almost before we knew it, our first year in college had come to an end. As of yet we hadn't learned anything, but we looked forward to our Sophomore year with the realization that College was, after all, nothing more than an overgrown high school.

Sophomore Year

A new year, a new Dean; it seemed that our Sophomore year started with Simeon Guterman assuming the rather unenviable position. The Social Science professors walked through the halls with a happy smile on their faces as they anticipated large grants to their departments from the Dean who alternated as a Professor of History. Their joy was turned to dark despair when it was announced that the ground-breaking ceremony of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine was scheduled for the near future, and that a million dollars a month would have to be raised. Some of the more suspicious English instructors were seen hiding their books to prevent them from being sold.

The Dean in his first statement made an appeal to the students for cooperation. The appeal brought in ten dollars and a suggestion for a three day school week. The I.R.S. showed its willingness to help by inviting Norman Thomas down to talk about disarmament.

His talk had no effect on the fun loving hoodlums around Yeshiva, and the police were called down several times to break up the melees. A marked interest in weight-lifting was noticeable soon after the skirmishes began, and a new course in judo was instituted. One sage suggested that we rid ourselves of the vermin by asking them to eat at the luncheonette or cafeteria which was undergoing their annual bombardment by The Commentator. The "dirty spoon" did remodel their establishment, however. New tables and seats were installed. It is estimated that the "old" food held out for two weeks before it too was replenished by a new supply.

The College announced that Political Science had assumed the position of number one major. Psychology rated second, and when one takes into consideration the mental condition of those students after four years of delving into such questions as "International Relations — A Dormitory Problem, With Special Consideration Given to Scotland," it

becomes clear that the budding "head shrinkers" just felt they had a ready-made clientele.

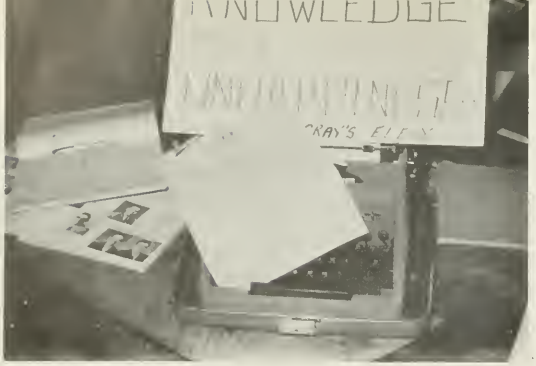
Later on in the year, Rabbi Bulman made another attempt at Dormitory Guidance. One of the most important innovations was pushing Minyan time in the morning from 7:45 to 8:00. The immediate response was beyond expectation — the fellows that had been coming down began over-sleeping.

Fencing Coach Arthur Tauber went off to Israel to open a physical therapy center there. At the time, some said that he was more needed here to rehabilitate the physical wrecks roaming the halls. However he cannot be blamed too much, as the sight of some of us would discourage anyone.

Our Sophomore year was also the one in which some of us came face-to-face with our year's requirement of science. In Chemistry, it meant having Dr. Samuel Soleveitchik. Intoxicated with the newly found power of chemicals, several of the fellows decided to find out if silver dollars are really made of silver. All they succeeded in doing, however, was letting loose a tank of hydrogen sulphide, whose aromatic fumes spread through the halls. The Co-op was quick to seize this opportunity to introduce the sale of clothespins. So successful were we, that the sale was continued for two weeks.

A new marking plan was studied by the faculty. The Dean, while making it clear that he had complete confidence in the instructors' ability to issue proper grades, still in all felt that there should be the formulation of a uniform system of marks. The student protest against anything that even resembled marking on a curve was second only to the howl of the several professors who were faced with the necessity of giving finals. And what could be worse than marking them?

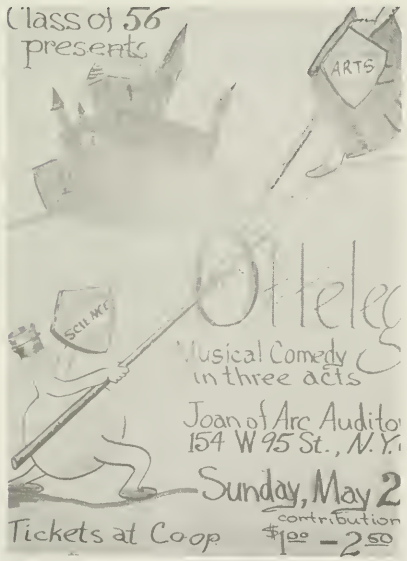
There was of course a lighter side, the Dean's Reception. In the true spirit of Dean's Receptions, past, present, and probably future, confusion was the keynote of the entire affair. At first "they" in charge thought that we might have it in the gym. After surveying the proposed area, they felt that perhaps it was not the proper locale for such an affair. After all, it would entail fixing the lights, polishing and cleaning the floors, fixing the clock that had stopped at 12:20 A.M. in 1936, and other comparable matters. So the Student Council decided it would be held in Lamport Auditorium. So the Administration said "no"! The reason for the refusal was that the Dean's Reception held in Lamport would not benefit the "institution." After but one postponement, the reception was finally bundled up and taken to the Cafeteria where it was immensely unsuccessful.



Junior Year

The Sociology Department, which was quickly endearing itself to the Administration by posing the question: "Do you feel that you were adequately prepared for the problems you encountered?" to 500 ordainees of Yeshiva, found that a majority of them answered negatively. To prevent such "surveys," the Administration planned to test all in-coming freshmen for proper placement and guidance. Among the major fields that the new test included, were Chemistry, Physics and Reading French.

As the year wore on, we did too. Finals were upon us and preparations were made for the forthcoming struggle for survival. Armed with everything from sleeve-covered notes to note-covered sleeves, we confidently went off to battle.



Just two more years to go!

Amidst a storm of protest, Dan Vogel was sent as registrar to Stern College. It is still not certain who did the protesting. This however, proved to be just one of many changes that were taking place. Joseph Ellenberg, who for years had held down the job as commissar, in charge of stipends, was elevated to the position of secretary to the President. This task was formerly held by Mrs. Schechter who was forced to leave when it was found that she was carrying too much of a load. The appointment of Mr. Ellenberg who couldn't be so burdened, was hailed as a stroke of genius.

For the prospective rabbis, a new three year plan was introduced. Just what it meant was at first not generally understood as far as we know is still confusing. Everyone seemed in favor of it however, mainly because it meant another year of unemployment in this mecca of the idle.

The Old Dorm Council, in a sudden spurt of aggressiveness and action, voted itself out of existence. J. Heller was elected president of the New Dorm Council and it was thought that this new position gave him the captive audience which was of invaluable aid to him in rehearsing for the N.Y.C.J.A. Oratory Contest which he won.

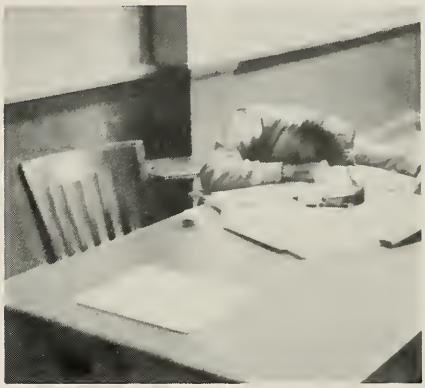
COMMENTATOR decided to settle once and for all, the question whether there should be synthesis or co-existence at Yeshiva, by a series of interviews

with the rabbis of R.I.E.T.S. It was established that there should and shouldn't, could and couldn't, would and wouldn't. The series was considered enlightening.

After all these years, the faculty decided that we were not getting a broad enough education. The proposed curriculum changes were a failure. The trouble being that the science professors wanted to stress their courses to the students of the Humanities, while at the same time watering down social science courses to the nature boys. The departments of the Social Sciences had opposite views. It was finally decided that nothing could be decided and the plan was sent back to the committee ice-box until next year. There was some talk that the scientists had even gone so far as to invite Abba Eben down to speak on the "Toynbee Heresy" in an attempt to discredit the History Department.

One of the highlights of the year was a play put on by the Dramatics Society, which makes an appearance on Yeshiva stages every three or four years. The production was Marlowe's "Faustus." The highlight of the performance was the announcement by Mephistopholes Siegel with hands held out before him to Faustus Kaplan.

This line brought a large response of applause and cheering from the assembled throng. "The Caine Mutiny," which was the next scheduled play, was called off, probably at the request of a faculty member who was particularly fond of the play and wished no harm to befall it.



Clubs also played a prominent role in an attempt to become self-educated. The Psych Club invited a hypnotist to lecture. Some of the students were carried away by the demonstration and attempted to mesmerize their professors. So far, it has been hard to tell whether or not they were successful.

Dr. Belkin made one of his infrequent guest appearances at a Dorm Council meeting in R.I.E.T.S. Hall, where he spoke surprisingly enough, about synthesis. The significant point here was that the students were allowed to visit R.I.E.T.S. Hall and marvel at the wonders they beheld there.

Some of us felt that it was now time to assert our maturity, and no fewer than four of us became engaged. Kupietsky and Kwestel, who were determined to stick together, engaged sisters. The Chesterfield Cigarette people were obviously unimpressed at our manhood and discontinued the distribution of free cigarettes. Geller was immediately inspired to write a Commie feature (about the art of "mooching cigs."

In response to the general plea for increased guidance, a new ordinance was handed down from the top to the effect that all registrants needed the signature of their guidance professor. In keeping with the spirit, Physics teachers were assigned Sociology majors and the English majors, Physical Education Instructors. The best piece of advice seemed to be, "Where do I sign?"

Towards the close of the year elections came into sharp focus. A new era in electioneering was introduced as Jack Heller took to the airwaves in an attempt to brainwash the student body into voting for him. They did and he swept into the presidency of the Student Council. Julius Berman also grabbed a broom and became Vice President. In our own class Gross, Nessis, and Schreiber won offices. Fingerhut and Kaplan having nothing left to choose from assumed leadership of MASMID. Friedlander and Danzger also fell victims to the rush for positions and became MASMID'S Literary and Activities Editors, respectively. Schmidt took the pictures and Finkel and Hellner assumed the positions of Art Editors. Schertz and Newstdater chased everyone through the halls in search of ads.

The rest of the class, whose numbers had now dwindled considerably, did the best they could in preparing themselves for next year, in which they would be kings of all they surveyed.

Senior Year

Well, here we are! This is the top! Just this year to go and we will be finished with our education. We will be able to leave school far behind and go out and earn a liv . . . Well anyway, the school term started out happily enough. The medical school finally opened and all the pre-med fellows breathed a sigh of relief.

The largest entering class of all time passed through Yeshiva's portals, disproving the idea that Yeshiva was a school thriving on wars. The increased explosion of H. Bombs was discounted.

In tho second issue of COMMIE there was an editorial about confusion in the college office that threatened dire results. In anticipation of any due consequences, Student Council quickly planned for the establishment of Health Insurance.

As a result of all the confusion a new three man rotating advisory group was set up to replace Rabbi I. Miller and Rabbi M. Teadler was appointed Dorm Advisor.

Rabbi Teadler's idea was to have the guidance program a success by making the students realize that the service was for our own benefit. The *idea* was fine.

During the fall semester Professor Litman gave a fireside chat on "Means and Ends," to which only eighteen students came. It was due no doubt to subgartelians pressures that forced the fellow elsewhere.

The Ford Foundation gave a grant to some two hundred thousand for raises in teachers' salaries. It almost affords them a living.

For some reason, which is still a mystery, T.V. Station WOR came down to Yeshiva one bright morning and spent the day here taking pictures for what was termed "Yeshiva University in Action," which was subsequently shown on their T.V. Station. The film was later shown at our school twice the same night, there being a large demand from most students to see whether their eyes were deceiving them or whether the films represented actual scenes of the University. Nothing seemed familiar especially the quiet serene attitude of everyone.

For the fourth straight year a Committee was formed by the Dorm Council to cut down on noise in the Dorm Halls. This time they had a plan. A Dorm Court was established which was empowered to level such terrifying punishments as two hour telephone service or four hours in the library. One student found guilty and sentenced to answering phone calls did so, but at his own diseretion, which meant after at least fifteen rings. The two students who were the first to be convicted were the Editor-in-Chief of COMMENTATOR and a candidate for Secretary-Treasurer of Student Council. The Pre-Law Society took immediate advantage of the situation to set up a defense office where all those accused could turn for legal aid. The only ones who took advantage of the offer were the two convicted mentioned above.

An assembly was held to launch the "New" guidance program. It started a half hour late and featured guest speaker Herman Wouk who followed the party line in praising the growth of Yeshiva and telling us how lucky we were to be here.

The Dean's reception was held at Stern College and turned out to be a very fine evening. The seniors participating in an intramural theatrical competition put on a play which was similar to a motion picture called "Trial." As a matter of fact the only difference most of us could see was the name. It was listed as a psychological drama but we referred to it as a tragic-comedy.

The Purim edition of COMMENTATOR dealt with a four column trilogy by Dr. S. T. Butterman of United Seminary. The president of the seminary, Dr. Samuel Beacon, was quoted as saying that the facts as interpreted by Butterman were usually unreliable. We have no comment.

A cheering note during the year was a message delivered by former Dean of T.I.P. Chusgin, in which he confidently stated that there was no doubt in his mind that a war in Israel would mean destruction for her enemies. This statement by the noted authority on military campaigns was indeed heartening.

The senior class in a desperate attempt to do something before they graduated prepared an original musical comedy written by Nat Geller and Emmanuel Federbush. Naturally, it did not come off. The reasons were never clearly stated but one can guess that the administration was of no particular source of comfort to the boys who were spending their own free time working on the play.

Rabbi Brayer spoke on the Dead Sea Scrolls and when one of them was later missing, it was assumed that a student had decided to return it to the Dead Sea.

The new dormitory was announced as going up and so were the prices. While talk of this new innovation was going on, Consolidated Edison made a survey of the lighting situation and found that out of forty-five locations investigated only seven were found to have adequate lighting. It was no surprise therefore under these dangerous conditions that Pre-Med majors totaled twenty-seven percent of the College students.

Closing out our stay in College was very similar to our humble beginning in that we inaugurated the first Graduate Record Exams. The Administration wanted to know just how much we had learned in College and we were determined to show them. At first there was some mutinous mutterings from us but when we were assured that the grades established on the exams would not be sent to the Graduate Schools, we consented.

And so the curtain is slowly falling. By the time this book is published we will have graduated. We have come a long way, especially Lous Schneider who has become a father. We've had our troubles and frustrations, of course, but we've also had our fun. I guess when you really come down to it, it wasn't so bad, was it?

". . . neither shall they learn war anymore."

In Retrospect

Herbert Gross

Senior Class President

The past four years have been dedicated to the pursuit of truth, to the shattering of myth, and perhaps to a certain orientation in specific disciplines. They have constituted a monumental individual and social experience. Each new personality and idea was tested to determine if its outlook, or a portion thereof, was worthy to assimilate into our own. These were the goals that the tradition of a university education had set for us.

In the beginning of our stay at Yeshiva we were more convinced by expostulation than by reason. Certain grand generalizations were accepted as gospel truth. We were cautioned by upper classmen to take everything with a grain of salt, but to little avail. Sometimes one instructor would contradict another and we would bring questions from one class to another. We began to doubt the competence of the instructor; yet, when the instructor criticized the book, we began to doubt the book. Our skepticism increased and with it our insecurity. The more practical among us called for guidanee, but the situation did not call for it. The questions we asked could only be answered from within.

The next stage in our college experience was to exploit the rational faculty. We consciously reasoned, and evolved certain systems and ideas. We were wont to diseuss these attitudes at the drop of a hat, and many a night was spent testing them among ourselves. During this period of development, our attitudes could probably be best characterized as extreme positions. There was little room for compromise. We were left or right, black or white, big Indians or little Indians.

Our attitudes were not inflexible however. Indeed, many a time we would adopt polar positions for the sake of a night's debate. These oscillations caused us to be skeptical of the extremes.

The intellectual ontogeny for some of us stopped at this point. We bowed to convention and adopted middle of the road attitudes that are so characteristic of our modern day society.

Others among us, however, were troubled. Reason, that faculty which we had come to trust — justified the extremes. We recognized the extra-curricular pressure of conformity to the means and

we realized that not all of us could become college professors.

This is the stage in which we now find ourselves. We are skeptical of reason — we cannot retain our extreme positions for the weight of convention and the responsibilities of life are upon us.

If this is all that remains for us, to blindly

adopt the conventional moves of the masses, then our efforts of the past four years have been in vain.

I don't believe, however, that our four years in college were four years wasted. It remains for us to apply the pragmatic test to the intellectual odyssey of the past four years. It was during this period that we discovered our rational faculty. At first overwhelmed by this discovery we thought that reason was a means to Universal Truth. After four years of search, we realize that there is no such thing as Universal Truth: and that which does exist, is only mortal striving towards such a goal. We shouldn't despair, for even though the racing hounds never catch the rabbit, they may win the race. We have found and we have exercised the faculty of reason and we are trained in its application.

The greater number of our years lie before us. These will be years of responsibility and decision. If these decisions are arrived at rationally, then our college education was certainly successful.

As we develop personality patterns, certain constants emerge as characteristics of our individuality. If upon graduation, we abandon reason, we will lose our individuality. We will become indistinguishable from one another; we will lose respect for self and respect for others.

This is the real danger. What is contemporary anti-intellectualism if not an abandonment of reason. We are a nation that boasts of more college graduates than any other, yet we are a nation that is fast losing its respect for the dignity of the individual. The results of anti-intellectualism are manifest in our literature and they are even brought into our living rooms by the advertising industry.

We should not allow ourselves to live and act in a manner that vitiates our college experience. We should be aware of the trends in our society and critically evaluate them. We should apply the tests that we developed in vitro to the real life situations that we are to meet.

The Missing Star

Norman Sinowitz

The sallow stars, punctuating the sky,
Seemed to sadly whisper and ask: "Why
Are the heavens drearily dim instead of bright?
Where is the lustrous luminescence of the night?"

A sonorous voice thundered from afar:
"You have lost your most scintillating star.
The star that illumined the intellectual night
Will no longer sparkle, no longer flash its light."

Scientist, thinker, layman on the terrestial plane below
Quickly saw the vacuum filled by the absent glow
Of the star whose rays the universe did bind
And did indelibly impress on each agnostic mind
The potent might of the minute mortal brain
Which could such empyreal thoughts entertain.

The formerly effulgent firmament
Through the night, lachrymosely did lament.
And on the crushed, cremated residue
An elegy was said by the mourning dew.

The star of science, called from his ethereal place,
May no more to the heavens lend his grace.
'Though the star, called Einstein, may no longer shine
In the hearts of men he has found his shrine.

The Philosophical Significance of Maimonides

Alexander Litman

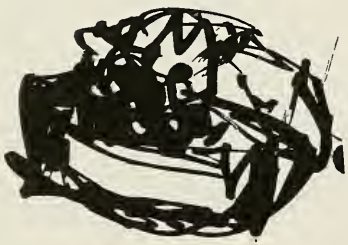
To understand Moses Maimonides' position in the history of thought it is necessary to glance at the conceptions of nature and man prevalent in the centuries that intervened between Aristotle and Maimonides. With the march of time the view of nature as an ordered whole yielded gradually but steadily to the conception of nature as a conglomerate of evil forces, and the conception of man as a stranger in the desert. Never was a man more disillusioned or more disheartened, never was there greater failure of nerve or less faith in man's abilities to understand the world and his place in it than the fifteen hundred years that separate Maimonides from Aristotle. But though this loss of heart was bolstered slightly by the Romans in their glorification of political activities, this regained confidence was of short duration. With the substitution of Caesar's dictatorship for the republic the decline continued and the despair became accentuated.

The contempt for the body as the seat of lusts and follies, proclaimed by the dying Socrates and reemphasized in the Gospel, became the program for man's way of living and the pre-requisite for his salvation. Only by freeing the soul from the tyranny and shackles of the body could man aspire to sit at the right hand of Glory and enjoy eternal blessedness. Aristotle's delight in the proud high-mindedness of the Greek gentleman and Cicero's exaltation of the *vir Romanus* gave way to the conception of man as a fallen angel in a hopeless pilgrimage through a valley of tears. And, as the reconnoitering dove in her aimless flight over the lashing waves of the flood longed for the gentle hand of the righteous Noah to return her to the warmth of the ark, so did the soul encased in the prison of the body pine for her return to the bosom of GOD. Against such tendencies in the direction of other-worldliness Maimonides determined to emphasize the superiority of the Jewish-Aristotelian naturalism. It was his purpose to show that nature was on the whole an orderly system, that man was a part of nature, and that human blessedness can not be achieved through the transformation or transfiguration of man's being but in completing and perfecting it. Not "there" but "here," not in walking on his head but in walking on this feet can man find his happiness.

Man's earthly happiness constitutes Maimonides all-embracing interest and the extent to which Maimonides aspired to a knowledge of nature was controlled and guided by the search for this happiness for man. To clarify and further this aim he sought materials in the world at large, in the works of Arabic thinkers, and in biblical and rabbinical dicta. Allegorical interpretations of terms, half-concealed statements of facts, hidden allusions, ambiguous references, and explained-away difficulties could not mar his conviction that the perfection of the human micro cosm is a primary aim. Armed with the belief that the realization of the nature of man's make-up is paramount he turned to man as a natural being, an organic whole of matter and form, the foundation and nucleus of all moral values. By insisting that matter is never found without form nor form without matter and by defining form or

soul as function, he indicated once and for all the dependence of soul upon the body and the impossibility of their separation except for purposes of discourse. As function soul can no more be dissociated from the organ of which it is a function than vision can be separated from the eye that sees or sharpness from the knife that cuts. He thus dispensed with the Platonic views of soul as a substance forced upon the body and adventiously united to it, with soul as a dance of Democritean atoms, and with the augustinian dichotomy between the outer man and the inner man.

But though the term soul denotes a hierarchy of functions beginning with the nutritive, passing through the sensitive, imaginative, and appetitive, and culminating in the intellectual, when applied specifically to man as man it denotes the intellectual function. Without the intellect man is not really man. As Maimonides says: "It is acknowledged that a man who does not possess this 'form' (the nature of which has just been explained) is not human but a mere animal in human shape and form." Soul presents a continuous series of functions, a series of potentialities and actualities. No higher level is possible without the lower, no sensation, without nutrition, no imagination without sensation, and no intellectual activity without the presupposition of a living, feeling and imagining animal.



Having shown the inextricable relation of organ and function and the dependence of the latter upon the former, Maimonides sets forth the ways and means by which man can actualize himself and thus find his happiness. For virtue and vice are not innate in man, ready-made and given to him. It is impossible, says Maimonides, that man should be born endowed by nature from his very birth with either virtue or vice. These are capacities or potentialities to be brought to perfect realization through activities in the world of men and things. To say that virtue is an actuality bestowed upon man or denied him, that he is from his very birth intelligent or stupid, is to repeat the arguments of astrologers and fatalists who say that from all eternity it has been decreed that this or that man should be either virtuous or vicious. Such a view, Maimonides insists, dispenses with all human initiative and makes the entire moral and intellectual life of man impossible. In order that man may work out his nature and thus become virtuous he must enter into active social and political relations and feel himself an agent in shaping them.

It must be understood at the outset that virtue for Maimonides is not an extreme but rather a mean state, a middle path between opposing forces. The virtuous man will be neither ascetic or sensuous, mirthful or desponding, miserly or liberal, cruel or merciful, faint-hearted or bold. In the endeavor to satisfy his nature he will follow the mean discovered by the application of rational insight. Maimonides' insistence upon guidance by the mean must be understood as a polemic against the dogmatic extremism of the various sects of his time. He saw only too clearly the impossibility of harmonizing extremes either within society or within any one individual. Having in his own person felt the cruelties and boundless miseries that accrue to man from fanaticism, he strove for an amelioration of intemperate attitudes. In place of a blind dogmatism that excludes rational procedure and mutilates, if it does not destroy, the moral and social life of man, Maimonides offers the mean as the catharsis of all dogmas and the dissolving acid of all extremes.

In the proper maintenance of his body lies the first step in man's endeavor to realize himself. Every detail necessary for the maintenance and preservation of physical strength and bodily health is laid down by Maimonides with masterly detail and with a thoroughness of which only a disciple of Aesculapius can boast. If man is to exercise his intellectual functions he must never forget the body which supports them. He must know what to eat and when to eat, what to drink, when to bathe, when to work, and when to play. Those, says Maimonides, who deny themselves all bodily pleasures must be condemned in the same fashion as those who glorify them. The proper care of the body and the satisfaction of biologico-physiological needs is not an end in itself. Eating, drinking, and sleeping do not constitute man's purpose and aim in life. Man does not live for the sake of living but for the sake of living well. Maimonides reiterates, "In the world to come, there is neither body nor frame, but the souls only of the righteous dwell therein divested of body." There is no sensuous paradise of the Mohammedans in which the bodies of the faithful

will participate after death. The satisfaction of the body acquires its importance from the fact that it serves as the basis and *conditio sine qua non* of the further realization of man's potentialities. Thus the body is no longer a prison of the soul, a hindrance in man's search for happiness, but its natural dwelling place. It is only the ignorant, Maimonides would say, who think that the attainment of virtue or of knowledge of the universe can be accomplished on

condition of an Icarus-like flight from the body. Even as "the light dove, piercing in her easy flight the air and perceiving its resistance, imagines that flight would be easier still in empty space." Man can walk with his head in the sky only because he walks with his body on earth.

Perfect bodily health is to be considered godly because only then can man be led to a true knowledge of Him. When properly managed the body is the organ of the soul and not merely the source of loves, lusts, fears, fancies, idols, and follies that prevent us from the proper exercise of our rational faculties. "Suppose," says Maimonides, "one should say: since jealousy, lust, ambition, and the like passions, are bad, and tend to bring man to an untimely end, I will withdraw from them altogether, and remove to the other extreme — and in this he might go so far as even not to eat meat, not to drink wine, not to take a wife, not to reside in a respectable dwelling house, and not to put on any proper garments, but only sackcloth, or coarse wool, or the like, just as the idolatrous priests do — we should object to this also as being an evil way, and unlawful to pursue and he who walks in this way is called a sinner." Participation in the divine does not presuppose the stifling and suffocation of natural desires but their completion in accordance with the mean. If for the neo-Platonists and contemplation of Pure Being required the abandonment of the body, for Maimonides the demands of the body required the abandonment of consecration to Pure Being.

In the attempt to provide the bare necessities of life man is thrust upon others for help. He is not a self-sufficient being as the fifth-century sophists took him to be, nor can he live in complete isolation, for a being so isolated would soon perish because of his inability to secure those things which his nature requires. More than that. Man is essentially a political animal and can only realize himself in the social organism of which he is a product. To become an actuality, virtue must be practised, it must be exercised in relationships between man and his neighbor. Without this actual exercise man can neither be called just, liberal, or righteous. If man is to act justly he must find himself in the proper social medium. In his insistence that the moral character of the individual depends upon society, Maimonides reechoes the cry of the Hebrew prophets for social justice, although their poetical zeal yields to the prose of the mean and their superabundant generosity to the calculating coolness of political sagacity.

Unfortunately the persecutions Maimonides had witnessed from his early boyhood and the nomadic life he was compelled to lead prevented him from composing a treatise on the best form of political organization in the manner of a Plato, an Aristotle, a Cicero or a Thomas Aquinas. But from his insistence upon man as a political animal and his emphasis upon the importance of social life it is clear how

fundamentally vital he regarded moral and political activities for the realization of man as man. Indeed, so vital were these relationships for Maimonides that he felt they controlled the whole intellectual life of man and that the character of man's knowledge of nature would depend upon the degree of his successful adjustment in his moral and social life.

It is not the social outcast, not the man who separates himself from others, not the dweller in catacombs or hermitages, it is rather the man firmly rooted in society, who is prepared to commune with Pure Form. For man, according to Maimonides, is not a knower, a passive contemplator, a disinterested spectator in a cosmic drama; he is mainly a doer, an active agent in a moral and social context. Here Maimonides follows Aristotle's distinction between the absolute actuality of the Prime Mover and the most total and continuous happiness of man. Whereas God as Pure Form eternally contemplates, man's *summum bonum* as a moral and social being consists in the fact that he is able to imitate divinity only *sometimes*. Man is a social being with some moments of solitude, and not a lonely thinker with some social moments. God must be worked for; in order to achieve divinity one must be a participator in all human activities.

The final stage in man's search for earthly happiness consists in the knowledge and love of God. But though such knowledge is the ultimate goal of man as man, it does not consist in a direct intuition or embrace of God: it is not an immediate grasp of the essence of God. "Another accepted axiom of metaphysics," says Maimonides, "is that human reason can not fully conceive God in His true essence, becaue of the perfection of God's essence and the imperfection of our reason, and because His essence is not due to causes through which it may be known. The inability of our reason to comprehend may be compared to the inability of our eyes to gaze at the sun, not because of the weakness of the sun's light, but because the light is more powerful than that which seeks to gaze into it." Whatever knowledge of God man may be able to acquire, that knowledge must be mediated by the senses. It is from the raw materials presenting themselves in sense-perception that reason is able to extract universal principles. Reason performs its operations only as a consequence of the contact of the human body with things. In his insistence upon the importance of sensory experience Maimonides follows the Aristotelian-Scholastic tradition that nothing can be in the mind which is not in the senses before.

In denying the possibility of man's jump into divine essence Maimonides dealt a death-blow to all Platonists and mystics for whom knowledge of God without the mediation of the senses, direct intuition of God, was the acme of bliss and perfection. He clasps hands with authoritative Jewish and Aristotelian doctrines that while some may walk *with* God it is impossible for anyone to walk *in* God. Thus, as the Romans built a system of duties around their republican virtues to keep them free from foreign contamination, and as the Hebrew sages built a fence around the Law to keep it intact, so did Maimonides construct a fence around God's essence to glorify the moral and intellectual life of man on earth.

More than that. By insisting that God's essence is beyond man's ken and that the study of God must be approached only by a well-adjusted moral and social individual Maimonides dispenses with any

partial and one-sided view of the cosmos. The universe, of which God is the form or the actuality of actualities or the highest genus, must not be seen through a partial defeat or success obtained in man's communal life. He would have man know that success and defeat are inherent in earthly life and that they must not be employed as points of departure or as categories for the understanding of nature as a whole. He would in one breath damn the Leibnitzian optimism, which proclaims this to be the best of all possible worlds, and turn in dismay from the self-contained Schopenhauerian motto that this is the worst of all possible worlds. Give up your prejudices, control your fancies, dispel your illusions, repeats Maimonides again and again, study logic, mathematics, and natural science, and then will you be able to approach nature with a single mind and an open heart. For those who approach nature through the phantoms of their brain will endeavor to adjust things to their prejudices and will thus be unable to see things in their true relationships. "We merely maintain," says Maimonides, "that the earlier Theologians, both of the Greek Christians and of the Mohammedans, when they laid down their propositions, did not investigate the real properties of things; first of all they considered what must be

the properties of the things which should yield proof for or against a certain creed; and when this was found they asserted that the thing must be endowed with those properties; then they employed the same assertion as a proof for the identical arguments which led to the assertion, and by which they either supported or refuted a certain opinion . . . *I tell you, however, as a general rule, that Themistius was right in saying that the properties of things can not adapt themselves to our opinions, but our opinions must be adapted to the existing properties.*" (Italics mine.) It is clear therefore that true knowledge can not be obtained by smothering nature in a fanciful formula but that whimsical concoctions must be given up for the sake of intellectual insight.

Although immediate knowledge of God is impossible, knowledge of His nature can be obtained through His works, and it is through contact with the variety of things in the universe and through a grasp of the forms exhibited by these things that man can arrive at true knowledge of the Form of Forms. "You, however, know," says Maimonides, "how all these subjects are connected together; for there is nothing else in existence but God and His works, the latter including all existing things besides Him; we can only obtain a knowledge of Him through His works; His works give evidence of His existence, and show what must be assumed concerning Him, that is to say, what must be attributed to Him either affirmatively or negatively." This knowledge of the works of God consists in the understanding of the field of action, of the myriads of particular

substances, the orderly succession of natural processes, and the laws governing these processes. The universe is discovered to be a stable entity and not a haphazard configuration of atoms. Just as the human body constitutes a microcosm so does the universe, whose parts are inter-related to form an organic whole, constitute a microcosm. But in spite of the fact that the universe is governed by laws and exhibits an all-pervading order it is not a strictly deterministic system as the Mutakallemim took it to be. It is instead an open universe in which the reign of order does not preclude the occurrence of novelty and change. Maimonides' polemic against determinism and his endeavor to reconcile order with novelty must be understood in terms of his all-embracing interest in man's earthly happiness. Just as in the social and political life man must feel himself an active agent in working out his own nature and in identifying himself with society, so must he feel himself a factor in the universe of which he is a part. Man can not feel at home in a world fated from all eternity to remain as it is. In the light of these considerations it is not difficult to see why Maimonides fought against the notion of the eternity of the universe, an idea identical for him with strict determinism.

An unbiased and dispassionate knowledge of nature teaches us that things were not made specifically for man in order that he might enjoy them. They do not come into being to serve man, although by discovering their natures and purposes man can employ them for his use. "I consider therefore," says Maimonides, "the following opinion as most correct according to the teaching of the Bible, and best in accordance with the results of philosophy: namely, that the Universe does not exist for man's sake, but that each being exists for its own sake, and not because of some other thing." Through the application of reason it is possible to discover the place and value each thing has in the scheme of the universe as a whole, and it is only through reason that man can learn to control things for his benefit.

When man arrives at such an intellectual view of nature he truly knows and loves God, and this love of God it is which constitutes his supreme blessedness. Through this knowledge he becomes a member in the cosmic order and feels at home in it, just as through moral knowledge he becomes a member in the social order. And it is in the harmonious synthesis of the human and the divine, the moral and the intellectual, the material and the spiritual, that man finds his fullest realization and his highest happiness on earth.

The philosophy of Maimonides is not that of a lonely contemplator drawing a faith for living out of an intellectual love and total embrace of God. His ideas are not the outcome of a spiritual resurrection attendant upon rejection by the world and man. He is not a solitary thinker spinning universal panaceas from the pinnacle of despair or devising a universal

formula of happiness that would apply to all men under all conditions. Man's happiness does not consist in a selfless devotion to infinite Being or in an absorption in the One of Plotinus. Spiritual life, according to Maimonides, does not consist in a laughter of Democritus or in the cry of despair of an Ecclesiastes that "All is vanity;" there is no Epicurean garden or Painted Porch of the Stoics in which to find refuge from the defeats and frustrations of this world. Human life is no longer an accidental occurrence in a universal pandemonium, a Platonic *meditatio mortis*, an ante-chamber to the world to come, or a longing for a sensuous paradise. Neither the persecutions which he witnessed nor his personal misfortunes could mar his conviction that the ideal must spring from the natural and not the reverse, that human blessedness can not be dissociated from its material basis, and that immortality can only be achieved in living and not in dying. If the neo-Platonists exalted the transcedental realm of Ideas as the natural dwelling place of the human spirit, Maimonides exalted the realm of nature as the womb and matrix of all spiritual values. ". . . *here*," cries Maimonides, "*is man's world, here is his home, in which he has been placed, and of which he is himself a portion.*" (Italics mine.)

In this emphasis upon man's earthly existence lies the philosophical significance of Maimonides. He suggested a way of life that required more reason and less authority, more analysis and less enthusiasm, more searching and less quibbling, more action and fewer words. And in praising Maimonides we can do no better than apply to him the celebrated dictum of Aristotle: "When one man said, then, that reason was present — as in animals, so throughout nature — as the cause of order and of all arrangements, he seemed like a sober man in contrast with the random talk of his predecessors."

Wordsworth and Keats:

Studies in Hope and Despair

Nat Lewin

The main purpose of poetry, in the minds of many of the most devoted and discriminating readers, is the elevation of the spirit. Poetry, according to these interpreters, must in its reflections upon its subject, seek to instill a certain loftiness into the soul of the sensitive reader. Such an interpretation would seem to negate completely the large store of poetry of despair which we find in most all of literature. For despair does not elevate the soul, nor does it benefit the spirit, and despairing poetry, then, by definition, would be self-destructive.

Just such a criticism is often levelled as certain of the nineteenth century Romantic poets in English literature, and particularly at Keats. In comparison with his elder contemporary Wordsworth, whose mood was a joyous one, Keats may be considered a despairing poet. His poetry is attacked on this ground, and

his detractors consider it sufficiently weighty to deny his greatness on this count alone.

In comparing the poetry of Wordsworth to that of Keats, one is struck by a single startling difference (among others less startling) in the attitude of the two. Wordworth's poetry is generally one of satisfaction — it expresses the poet's joy in what he finds in life. The poetry of Keats' on the other hand, is one of frustration. Keats constantly yearns for traits or abilities which cannot possibly be granted him. Wordworth might be termed a "positive" poet, in that he concerns himself with man and with the abilities that man is granted upon this world; Keats, in the same sense would be termed a "negative" poet, in that his interest lies in the shortcomings of man. Thus Wordsworth's poetry tends to impart an air of joyousness, Keats' produces an aura of despondency.

If requested to condense the theme of Wordsworth's poetry into a concise phrase, we would remark that his poetry describes the beneficial effects of nature on man. This narrow interest in nature's benevolent aspect perforce turns Wordsworth's poetry into a profession of optimism and a declaration of hope.

There are many occasions where, in spite of his preconceived notions, Wordsworth's optimism could have turned into despair. His lament over his faded powers of appreciation of nature in the celebrated Ode is concluded with a double question:

"Whither is it fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?"1

A less optimistic poet than Wordsworth would now have groaned in despair and proceeded to lose all hope. Wordsworth however, returned to his manuscript after a span of several years and found hope in his newly developed emotions. A less optimistic poet than Wordsworth could surely not have bubbled over with the cry of "O joy"2 with which Wordsworth greeted his discovery of new-born hope. A less optimistic poet would have concluded on a note of grief and not continued as Wordsworth did:

"We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what we find behind."3

This unbelievable optimism and refusal to accept the possibility that nature could be harmful to even the slightest extent is most clearly expressed in "Tintern Abbey," in which the poet remarks that nothing

"Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings."4

This "faith" becomes an assertion in The Tables Turned":

"She has a world of ready wealth
Our minds and hearts to bless — "5

Wordsworth was not so naive as to believe that good *must* result from Nature for the same poem also states that nature "*may* teach you more of men . . . than all the sages can."6 And yet, he clearly expresses his optimism with regard to Nature:

"And I *must* think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there."7

The compulsion indicated by the word "must" is a sign of Wordsworth's constant and incessant optimism. His outlook was necessarily a cheerful one, for he saw Nature's effect on man as ultimately beneficial.

Wordsworth's point of view towards the objects he described are also evidence of the joy and hope he found in life. His opinion of the wretched "Cumberland Beggar" is surely a joyful and optimistic one. A less cheerful poet would have chosen to describe the beggar's proximity to death or his disabilities and not have lingered on the benevolent effect he has on his surroundings (as Wordsworth did). The same attitude is noticeable in "Animal Tranquility and Decay," which, in the hands of a poet like Keats, would have turned out morbid beyond description.

Wordsworth's approach, both in his central theme and also in his means for expanding on the theme, is one of joy and thankfulness, and it thereby implies hope. But was Wordsworth truly an optimist, or was his optimism limited to a sort of joyful poetical didacticism? Was he personally optimistic, and, when dejected, did he actually foresee happiness?

Hints of his personal reactions to despair and suffering are scattered throughout his poetry in lines like:

"Not without hope we suffer and we mourn."8

In *The Prelude* he also dwells on his seemingly eternal optimism. When liberals around him began to despair of the French Revolution following the September Massacres, Wordsworth optimistically believed the massacres to be "ephemoral monsters, to be seen but once."9 Even after the reign of terror, when Robespierre was finally put to death, Wordsworth still clung to his hope:

"Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and earth
March firmly towards righteousness and peace."10

When finally the poet was forced to lose all faith, he would still not give up his hope for mankind. Rather than sink into a despondent stupor, Wordsworth selected Godwinian optimism as his hope for humanity, until

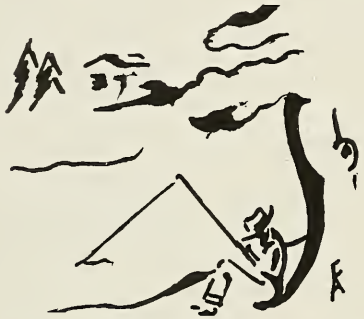
"Wearied out with contraries
Yielded up moral questions in despair."11

At this point, in spite of his innate optimism, a helping hand was needed. With the aid of his sister, he returned to his original "Sweet counsels between head and heart"12 and to his abiding faith in humanity.

We see from this, his spiritual autobiography, that Wordsworth was ever an optimist. His preference for "the budding rose over the full rose bloom"13 is a sign of this optimism. In all sorrow or pain, Wordsworth retained a faith in Nature and in humanity and thereby found joy in life.

However, Wordsworth's joy was founded on false premises, for, as Matthew Arnold remarked:

"Wordsworth's eyes avert their ken
From half of human fate."14



Wordsworth refused to even consider Nature's deleterious effects, and thus remained apart from human suffering. By excluding a segment of the real world from his view, Wordsworth developed an air of artificiality around his poetry, and thus failed in his attempt to inspire the reader. Wordsworth's lesson seems like a distant message from a strange land, where joy abounds and no speck mars Nature's eternal benevolence. The reader cannot identify himself with such a poet, and the poet's message remains uninspiring.

Nevertheless, Wordsworth's optimism was sincere, his faith, pure. The message he tried to express was, indubitably, *hope*.

Keats, on the other hand, saw the bleak side of life. He enjoyed and admired many of life's pleasures, even excluding those that are purely sensual. His appreciations of literature and Nature have been immortalized in his poems ("Upon First Looking into Chapman's Homer," "Lines on the Mermaid Tavern," "Great Spirits Now on Earth," "To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent," "To Autumn," "On the Grasshopper and Cricket"). However, Keats could never find satisfaction. The future of everything around him is described as very black, and Keats spent great efforts worrying over this future. His greatest works describe Time's nullifying effect on life. Surely a poet who says:

"When old age shall this generation waste
Thou shalt remain in midst of *other woe*
Than ours . . ."15

cannot be considered an optimist. A poet who believes that melancholy is to be found "in the very temple of delight,"16 or who, when describing the wonder of natural emotions, refers to "Beauty that must die, . . . And Joy bidding adieu . . . and aching Pleasure, . . . turning to poison"17 is certainly a very great pessimist and can surely not be said to be preaching hope.

Keats often introduced an unpleasant note into his happiest poetry, and this too is characteristic of his utter despair. He is not satisfied with his description of the delights of Autumn, for the presence of Autumn implies the absence of Spring. Thus, he suddenly interrupts with:

"Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?"18

And his answer is one of resignation, not one of hope. He does not rejoice in the memory and effects of Spring as Wordsworth would have done, nor does he even look forward to the coming Spring as Shelley did. Keats rather answers:

"Think not of them, thou hast thy music too."19

Though Spring is preferable, our sad lot forces us to console ourselves with Autumn.

Even a nightingale's beautiful "full-throated" voice is to Keats no more than a reminder of human frailty:

"Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down."20

And even Love, the supreme emotion, falls victime to this despair in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."

In his dedication of the poems of 1817 to Leigh Hunt, Keats moaned over the fact that "Glory and loveliness have passed away,"21 and the solace he found was not in the memory or effect of this bygone loveliness, in which Wordsworth would have rejoiced, but in the meager fact that his poems of despair "could please . . . a man like thee."22

Keats' pessimism was undoubtedly largely due to his fatal illness and to his fear of death. The sudden conclusion of the sonnet beginning with "After dark vapors" is evidence of this gloomy outlook which clouded Keats' pleasure in being alive.

Very possibly, under different circumstances, Keats would have enjoyed life thoroughly, and his view would have been a different one. But as we read his poetry, we find him to be very sour and grandly pessimistic.

On the other hand, his pessimism may have been caused by his utter frustration — the frustration which occasioned:

> "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art."23.

Keats, evidently, was not easily satisfied. Life, with all its pleasures (sensual and otherwise), was unsatisfying, since it was not perfect. The abject surrender of life to Time bother Keats, and *it* may have occasioned his pessimism.

However, Keats' pessimism, unlike Wordsworth's optimism, was the result of a visualization of human life in its entirety. Keats saw both good and bad in life, and, to him, the latter outweighed the former. He could find solace only in the one thing that was "a joy for ever,"24 in Beauty, for

> "In spite of all,
> Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
> From our dark spirits."25

Keats finds man's spirit to be dark not because he looked only to the darkness and averted his eyes from the light. To the contrary, Keats loved and admired Nature and all its blessings. But life's sacrifice to Time (the importance of which was emphasized by his illness) overshadowed all other considerations.

At any rate, we find ourselves with the poetry of a Wordsworth, a poetry founded on joy, thankfulness, and hope. We also find ourselves with the poetry of Keats, a poetry based on despair, pessimism, and imperfection. Which is greater? We are forced to conclude that, on this criterion alone, Keats is the greater poet. Wordsworth's poetry may have been one of hope, but it was not one of *true* hope, not one of *founded* optimism. Wordsworth based his philosophy of joy on a non-existent foundation and built his castles of happiness in thin air. He imagined a Nature wholly benevolent and erected his philosophy upon this dream. Keats, however, visualized, human life. His illness may have given him a slightly distorted view, but his observation was thorough. His message may have been one of depair, but it was *real.*

This reality raises the seemingly valueless poetry of despair to a level higher than that of Wordsworth's seemingly valuable poetry of hope. For in *true* despair one can find elevation of the soul, both in sympathy for the despairing and in an understanding of man's lot on earth. A true poet of despair, whose resignation is not a groundless one, but who actually views life despairingly can bring about greater and deeper emotions in the heart of his audience than can a poet of hope who blindly grasps optimism without attempting to discern the true value of man's existence.

In case of a poet of true hope and one of true despair, one may choose to one's liking. But in the case of false hope as against true despair, one must inevitably choose the poet of true despair as the greater.

(1) "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality," ll. 57-58.
(2) Ibid. l. 130
(3) Ibid., ll. 180-81
(4) "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," ll. 132-34.
(5) "The Tables Turned," ll. 17-18
(6) Ibid., ll. 22-24.
(7) "Lines Written in Early Spring," ll. 19-20.
(8) "Elegaic Stanzas - Peele Castle," l. 60.
(9) *The Prelude*, Book X, l. 46
(10) Ibid, ll. 588-89
(11) Ibid., Book XI. ll. 304-5
(12) Ibid., l. 353
(13) "Ode on a Grecian Urn," ll. 46-48.
(16) "Ode on Melancholy," l. 25.
(17) Ibid., ll. 21-24
(18) "To Autumn," l. 23.
(19) Ibid., l. 24.
(20) "Ode to a Nightingale," ll. 61-62.
(21) "To Leigh Hunt, Esq.," l. 1.
(22) Ibid., ll. 13-14
(23) "Sonnet - Bright Star," l. 1.
(24) "Endymion," Book I, l. 1.
(25) Ibid., ll. 11-13.

Some Notes on Progress: *With Special Attention to Condorcet*

Gerald Friedlander

Louis XIV, king of France, and "divine emissary of God," must have smiled smugly to himself, as the ornate clocks of Versailles rang in the New Year, 1687. France lay prostrate and subservient beneath his gilded glove. Peace and order covered the land with a stifling weight. No dissenting voices were raised in challenge of Louis' absolute rule. The bothersome Hugenots had been expelled, persecutions of the heretics were proceeding at a lively pace. Louis' smile would have quickly changed to disbelieving despair had he been able to peer into the forthcoming hundred years of history. We, from our vantage point in time, can see how wrong he was. An exceedingly astute man in that year might also have noticed some portents of things to come. The cracks in the stately edifice Louis had built were beginning to show and would within the next few years bring the whole system tumbling down.

The central agent of destruction was the notion of Progress. During the Middle Ages, it lay dormant, because the church represented after all, the final perfection of society. It was therefore idle, if not sacrilegious, to hope for any change. The force of the idea was there, however, and the tradition though dormant was strong. With the breakdown of the Medieval system, the adoption of new, more humanistic and naturalistic values, the idea was again brought into focus. It still had powerful enemies to contend with. Classical humanists, the heirs of the Greeks, insisted on looking back to the classics as the "Golden Age" and vigorously opposed glorification of the modern and new.

In 1687, in the famous *Quarelles des Anciens et des Modernes*, the central problem was progress. When Charles Perrault in the Sorbonne read his poem in praise of modern practices, he seemed like a lonely figure, battling against the force of an entire era. Yet, he had the future in his hand and the course of the next century was contained in his lines. His poem, an innocuous and quite poor dissertation on the relative merits of contemporary authors over the Classical writers, became the focal point of the struggle between the progressive and conservative groups in France. It was the first sign of rebellion against the 17th century thought. It was an appeal for a break with the past and a condemnation of the classical tradition. And, as with all such movements, we must first understand the object of its rebellion — here, the 17th cenutry. The Cathedral of Reims represented the medieval spirit but the formal, elegant, and static Palace of Versailles best represents the spirit of the 17th century. The great thinkers and writers of the period abhorred the idea of progress. The glory of Louis XIV was at its peak, and the classical influence at its height. 17th century thought was preoccupied with the universal, the formal, the unchanging, and the impersonal. A critical spirit was non-existing. Classical Aesthetics and discipline rigidly constrained the bounds of thought. All believed that mankind was at its apogee, and art, basking in the reflected glory of the Greeks, had achieved a harmonious, successful and permanent deadlock with progress, time, and all other disturbing factors. This glorious state seemed bound to continue forever. The disillusionment of the thinkers of this period was, however, drawing close due to a complex of events. First, in 1685, Louis revoked the Edict of Nantes. This

revocation left France's always unstable economy almost completely wrecked. The furious persecution of the Huguenots stirred many writers to pleas for tolerance. The growing senility of the king, his constant need for money and levied taxes made the people's lot an intolerable one. The ruinous foreign wars that France had plunged into, were slowly bleeding her of her strength and men.

It is at this time that we notice the appearance of the "Philosophe." The "Philosophe" was essentially a critic and a propagandist, and not a philosopher. The two main props of the "Philosophes" are the notions of "reason" and "progress." Both these notions are based on an almost religious faith, that these men shared in the order of nature. All these men were profoundly influenced by Newtonian Mechanics. The universe was exact, orderly, and all forces were inevitable and predictable. Man could therefore, by an assiduous application of his natural reason, investigate and eventually come to know all things. In science, Mathematics was the supreme power. It had accomplished so much. Mathematical reasoning, abstract and deductive as it was, became the vogue, and was applied to all fields of knowledge. It was therefore inevitable that someone, imbued with the contemporary ideals of Reason and Progress and influenced by the success Newton had had in Physical Science, should attempt to apply these methods and ideas to History.

As our interest here is not in a general history of the "Age of Reason" — but in that singular and specific phenomenon called Progress, it would be more in tune to examine, closely, one man particularly associated with this phenomenon.

Condorcet may be considered, in a limited sense, the father of modern history and sociology. What distinguishes him from previous historians was his attempt to find the basic underlying patterns in history. He wanted to establish laws for history as definite as those Newton had established for Physics. This law, which he thought he had found, was the law of progress.

Before we continue any further in an investigation of Condorcet, something more must be said about the 18th century. As we have indicated before, the "Philosophes" were mainly critics of their society. The emphasis on the impersonal and universal in the 17th century had shifted to an interest in the personal and the present in the 18th. We travel from Racine to Voltaire, from the impersonal observer of human passions to the violent polemist and critic of human institutions. In the 18th century these "Philosophes" represented the reappearance of the Messianic ideal. The belief in a "Golden Age" had been, however, turned from a religious ideal to a social one. Thinkers were absorbed in the problem of an ideal society, of the perfect state, not as a theoretical concept, but as a definite goal — towards which humanity was inevitably marching.

Condorcet partakes strongly of this tradition. He starts with this assumption — man is heading upward continually. The Janus-like ideal of Reason and Progress appeared to Condorcet, not just as a possibility of the human condition, but as a strong, almost supernatural force, as an impersonal and inevitable force inherent in society. They are teleological notions. He saw History as unfolding according to a vast plan, towards a definite goal. This goal is the Utopian society. It is this conviction that enables Condorcet to divide history so exactly into ten periods, progressing upwards like the steps on a ladder. Progress, however, does not work in a vacuum. Its medium is human reason. Without reason, there can be no progress. The inevitable march of progress, however, is insured by the presence of reason. Man will use his reason. Of this Condorcet and his century were eminently sure. And so the progress of humanity is assured.

The influence of mathematical thought is all pervasive. His remedies for society's wrongs are as pat and as final as algebraic equations. They are a product of deductive reasoning and have no place for any evolutionary procedures. The constitution of the U. S. is an example of such a mathematical faith, in part. It sets down principles and complicated formulae for government without taking into account any organic evolution of such institutions. It was possible to write such a document because the thought of the age was so sure of the end. They

felt that one had only to show the way, establish the formula, and the people would immediately follow.

Condorcet, in this sense, sums up the thought of his age. His main assumptions are (and they are assumptions, for they are all a priori and, like mathematical axioms, not subject to proof) that; man is basically good; man is rational and will use his reason if taught correctly; man, being endowed with these qualities, must without any doubt continually progress; and that this progress is orientated towards a specific and definite goal, which is predetermined by the very nature of man. Taking these principles, he applies them to a study of history which turns out to be, not so much a study as an affirmation of these principles. In his "Esquisée d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humaine," he plays down such periods which do not suit his thesis and leaves out such facts which do not jibe with his contentions and time. This naive faith in Reason places Condorcet within the pale of 18th century thought. Condorcet contains, however, within himself the seeds of the destruction of his own system. He is the spiritual father of Comte, and of an empirical investigation of history. Being the first one to turn back directly to History, he unwittingly aided in the destruction of his own edifice, which could not withstand the brutal force of fact. His influence on the sociologists and the Utopians of the next century, on St. Simon for example, is unquestioned. They however would not swallow his unreasoning belief in reason. Progress becomes in the 19th century more practical and more revolutionary. The 19th century rejected the matematical influence and turned to the biological sciences, more and more. But Condorcet and the 18th century ideals have lived on and strongly influenced even modern life in the Constitutions and National Ideals and in a great part of our thinking.

Progress was the great mover in the 18th century. The French Revolution was its child and its destruction. It destroyed a great deal of the people's belief in rationality and goodness of mankind. From 1687 to 1789 it had its field day, though. It helped to dethrone kings, upset the most established social order in Europe, and sent Louis' descendants scuttling out of France. And if Louis in 1687 had paid more attention to poets and "Philosophes," and less to Protestants, History might yet have changed.

Democracy in the Jewish Constitution

Solomon Jacobowitz

Source of Jewish Constitution. — Looking back into Jewish history we do not actually find that a clear well defined constitution ever prevailed over a major period of time. It appears that Israel always had an effective absolute ruler, whether native king, high priest, or foreign conqueror. To find the elements of a Jewish constitution we must look to the Jewish writings, and of these the Rambam, in his *Mishnah Torah* presents the best work for our purpose.

Problem of Jewish History. — From the relevant parts of the Bible it is evident that the laws outlined by the Rambam were never completely put into effect, not even during the time of David and Solomon. The *Sanhedrin*, as envisaged by the *Talmud* and *Rishonim*, is never mentioned in the time of the First Temple. The term itself suggests that no such major institution had been established before the Hellenistic period. However, we must still look to the portions of the *Talmud* dealing with laws concerning *Kings* and the *Sanhedrin* for the political section of the Jewish constitution.

The major problem of reconciling this with the known facts of the Biblical era, is one that merits much inquiry. The apparent discrepancies are not confined to the political sphere; it is a question of reconciling the entire oral law with the written law, and ancient Jewish history, with medieval and modern. But within the scope of this short article we shall not treat this matter in any detail. We wish only, to analyse certain political aspects of Jewish law as set forth by the *Rishonim*.

Rambam: Mishna Torah. — A Jewish state has three main branches of government: The Kingship, the Priesthood, and the *Sanhedrin*. To a certain extent the King resembles the American Executive, while the *Sanhedrin* on the same basis would represent a combination of the Legislature and Judiciary. The Priestly class has a unique position, and the office of High Priest is not restricted to ritual functions at the Holy Temple. He is the only man before whom the King must rise and his relationship with the *Vrim V'Tumim* lends his decisions tremendous importance. His work appears, often, to have been paralleled, sometimes even eclipsed by that of the Prophet, particularly, during the time of Samuel and Nathan. But the Prophet, as such, does not represent an established institution of state: he is rather the link between the state and G-d, comparable, perhaps, with the occasional *Bat Kol* of later times. (According to one *Midrash*, the prophets who anointed kings were the heads of *Beta Dinim* and did not act in individual capacities.)

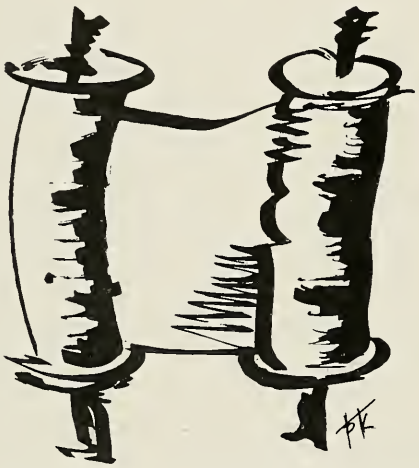
The Elements of Democracy. — We are not primarily concerned here with the specific functions of each branch of government. We, rather seek to discover any democratic concepts that may be envisioned in their structure. On examination we discover two distinct concepts. The first is the law of *Achrei Rabim L'hatos* which, as far as government is concerned, apply only within the *Sanhedrin*. The second is the law that a king must be acceptable, not only to G-d, but also to the people as a whole.

Sanhedrin. — *Achrai Rabim L'hatos*, is an essentially limited principle. It applies only within a specified group and in no way represents a form of public franchise. The general public has no say in the choice of judges and the qualifications of a judge consist, solely, of his personal *Yiras Shamaim* and his ability to perform the duties of his office. The position of the *Sanhedrin* is thus comparable with that of the philosophers in Plato's Republic.

Within this rabbinical assembly, however, decisions of the majority are binding, and take effect as decisions of the entire body. On the surface this would appear to be a limited application of natural

democracy — the rule of the majority. (A natural system means one that is logically developed on natural lines without artificial influence; a doctrinal system is one that is produced by human thought or acceptance of given ideas, such as socialism or theocracy.) But in truth we have here an entirely different approach.

Relationship of Ritual to Government. — The *Gemorah* (in *Chulin* and elsewhere) derives from this precept of *Achrai Rabim L'hatos* the general *Din Bitul B'rov.* We can see from this that the *Gemorah* understands *Achrai Rabim L'hatos* as one of the examples of *Bitul B'rov.* In other words, the



Torah declares that the minority becomes absorbed within the majority, clearly a doctrinal, not a natural concept, and quite incompatible with basic democracy. Again, we know that *Issur* is *Batol* in *Hetter* but *Hetter* is not *Batol* in *Issur*, which could not be the case if *Bitul* were a natural process. Obviously, then, it is a precept, applicable in those situations for which it is prescribed, one of which is the case of the majority in a court.

Here we have discovered the fundamental difference between Jewish civilian law and its secular counterpart — indeed between the entire Jewish code of human conduct and the secular attitude to life.

Greco-Roman Philosophy. — Socrates taught that knowledge is good if it leads to a good life, and Aristotle expressed a similar idea in different words when he said that to live the good life is to live according to one's intellect. To them, as also to most of the modern Western world, the human race is its own supreme arbiter, and men's conduct and sense of values tries to be measured and judged in human terms. The supreme good is a man-made ideal, and in matters of government it is logical that people should utilize such natural means as majority rule — let the majority of the supreme arbiters, human beings, decide!

Fundamental Jewish Philosophy. — Judiasm, however, begins from a far-reaching premise that affects every phase of existence and life. Man himself and everything within and around him, physical and spiritual, is the creation of One G-d. This Creator, since He is the only Creator, is the supreme ruler and sole arbiter. Good is what he defines as good, irrespective of man's thought or men's existence. Therefore, while secular society declares that it is good to help one's neighbor, because of man's natural feelings and because, in the long run, benevolence is conducive to expedient living. Judaism declares the same act to be good because G-d enacted it as such in His *TORAH.* In the same way, Judaism includes the rule of the majority not because it is by nature the only logical system to follow, but because the *TORAH* decrees it. We follow this rule, also, only within the limits the *TORAH* herself has proscribed.

Laws of Sanhedrin. — Majority rule thus applies only within the *Sanhedrin*, not among the masses; the area of jurisdiction is limited, and simple majority is not always sufficient — e.g., the death penalty requires a majority of two.

Secular Political Science Excluded. — We can see then that in Judaism natural democracy, and natural freedom do no exist. All Jewish socio-political concepts are doctrinal and belief in a personal G-d necessitates that it cannot be otherwise.

The King. — On many major matters, e.g., on the declaration of a Permissible War, the king must consult the *Sanhedrin.* This, as we have seen, does not represent a national check on the activities of the monarch, since Courts of Law are to be appointed according to given qualifications, not elected according to popularity.

Democratic Consent. — But there is a national check in the stipulation that the king upon his appointment must be acceptable to the people. This public consent is not expressed in terms of an election by votes, but it is very important since the king has important executive powers which are arbitrary and extend even to questions of life and death. It is he, in fact, who enforces law and order because every Court of Law, apart from its lack of means of enforcement, is very restricted by the stringent requirements of the criminal law — for

example, Witnesses and Warning. General economic and international matters are also the concern of the king.

King as a Servant of G-d. — But it is important to understand, even the king in all places where his jurisdiction applies does not rule as an absolute monarch. He remains the servant of G-d, by whose laws he must abide. He rules by virtue of the right conditionally granted him by G-d. This could hardly be more aptly shown than in the rule that the king cannot decline honor due to him, for the King of Israel is not only a ruler, but also a representative and human symbol of the Kingdom of G-d.

All Institutions Have One Purpose. — Here, then, we have the main elements of the Jewish political system. Democracy does exist in it to a certain extent, but it is not natural democracy and its manifestations are not limited to the political sphere. For in Judaism there can be no complete separation between politics and ethics, between law and ritual, or between State and faith. All these are part of one all-embracing religion which relates every facet of life to the duty of the created towards the Creator, and which has influenced and guided Jewish history through the millennia.

Gestalt and Art

Joshua Cheifetz

A noted authority has defined art as the personal experience of the artist, compositionally organized in a sensuous medium serving as symbols. In line with this general definition we propose to examine the relationship of "Art" and "Gestalt." Gestalt is commonly understood as a technical term originating with a certain group of German psychologists. The broad or general outline behind the concept, however, has had a long currency in history.

The early Greek thinkers repeatedly stressed relationships or modes of organization, continually searching for a law of arrangement, a principle of synthesis or order. In this, they stood dynamically opposed to the atomists and elementarists of their day.

Many eminent men had a precognition of some of the basic ideas of *Gestalt*. William James (1840-1910) deflated the atomists' theory by exposing the "psychologist's fallacy;" the assumption that when one has reduced a complex to its supposed parts, the parts must have been present throughout the whole process.

The famous French philosopher, Henri Bergson, noted that the perceptual whole which we experience on a starlit night, includes an integration of everything from the stars we observe to the processes of the brain during the act of observation.

Von Ehrenfels concluded in 1890 that over and above various sensory ingredients there must be

qualities belonging to organized forms. He coined the term "form quality," ("Gestaltqualitat"), to describe that quality which a melody or painting possesses which cannot be ascribed to the component tones or colors.

It was Max Wertheimer, however, who inaugurated the German school of Gestalt Psychology in Frankfort in 1912. Following his observations on the Phi Phenomenon, the Experience of Movement, he was led to insist upon the reality of the experience

of motion as something dynamically distinct from the awareness of position and of temporal succession of such positions. He subsequently protested against the general modern scientific movement from the particular to the general. "We cannot achieve," he said, "an understanding of structural totals by starting from their ingredient parts." An understanding of the component parts follows only from an understanding of, and insight into, the whole. This led to two basic laws concerning the relationships of wholes and parts. The first is the law of membership character. The tones in a melody do not have fixed definite qualities, to which a form quality is somehow added. It is rather that each such tone manifests qualities which depend upon the specific placement and contact. A patch of color in a landscape, far from being an ingredient in a total, depends for its value upon the context which nature, or the artist, supplies. Gestalt psychologists therefore insist that the attributes or aspects of component parts are defined by their relations to the system in which they function as a whole.

The second main feature stressed by Wertheimer is the law of "pragnanz," or "goodness." This states that with a knowledge of the underlying structures, one can determine what form any unstable structure will assume. It will be that kind of organization which is most orderly, most comprehensive, most stable, and most free of the casual and arbitrary; in short, that which is most good. "Pragnanz" is the dynamic attribute of self-fulfillment, intrinsic in all structured totals.

These two laws are generally representative of the Gestalt system, in which one works not with an infinite number of tiny independent particles, but with a limited, finite number of possible modes of stable organization. These modes, because of their orderly, rational, and intelligible form, are capable of being discovered and of having their dynamics understood.

There are at least two applications of Gestalt principles in connection with art; one, to the observer of the work, and another to the artist. The first is the problem of what occurs when we look at, or listen to, a work of art. The usual explanation of artistic expression is not based on the physical pattern of the painting, but on the past experience which the pattern brings back to mind. Wertheimer emphatically denies this. He claims that neither past experience nor logical conclusions are necessary for an understanding of the elementary features of expression. Their meaning is perceived at least as directly and spontaneously as the shape and color of an object by means of what has been termed the "tertiary qualities" of sensory phenomena. Kindness or aggression, straight-shooting determination or hesitation; are expressed in the curves of the physical movements — or traces of movements — which accompany such mental attitudes. A geometry of "expressive features" is anticipated. This would describe their characteristics with as much scientific precision as our present geometry is able to describe the difference between a straight line and a curve. The underlying idea is that the dynamic characteristics of timidity are always identical. For example,

it makes no difference whether we trace the path of the timid man who approaches the office of his boss

in terms of time and direction, or whether we translate into a graph the succession of his psychological impulses, with respect to his aim. This theory of an isomorphic (identity of form) connection between psychological and physical processes scientifically corroborates the observation that we call the movements of a dancer mournful because the dynamic features of mourning are physically present in her movements and can be directly perceived. Therefore, the theory of expression in art should not proceed from the attitudes of the human body and explain the flaming excitement of Van Gogh's trees or El Greco's clouds through some sort of anthropomorphic projection. One should rather proceed from the expressive qualities of curves and shapes, and show how, by representing any subject matter through these curves and shapes, expression is conveyed to human bodies, trees, clouds, etc.

Analogous to the theory of isomorphism is the statement by Francis Reitman in "Psychotic Art." He states that it is in the structuring of a pattern that the feelings of satisfaction, experienced by trained observers, depend when they view certain pictorial products. Differences in the effectiveness of structuring. constitutes the scale of aesthetic values, and thus effect our artistic judgment.

What the previous authorities have failed to mention is a much more basic question in Gestalt and Art; the problem of whether painting must constitute a whole and is so seen by the viewer, or whether it is divisible into parts and sections. Reitman is extremely critical of the application of Gestalt and "configuration" to all sorts of phenomena. He believes that a painting is a whole only in the sense that it is a self-sufficient and self-contained system in relation to its actual surroundings; the frame, the wall, etc., and that the various relations constituting its pattern are usually all consonant with each other according to the criteria of art. However, he objects to the over-emphasis on wholeness in a painting, since it is only one of many relations. He also states that it is entirely wrong to argue that a painting can only be appreciated as a whole in our first immediate visual contact with it. Most artists and aesthetic authorities will testify that an artistically satisfactory painting has manifold relations in its structure. When the spectator views the painting on different occasions, he is impressed by different aspects of its varied aspects. The relation of the whole is thus usually present only in the background of awareness as a "schema." A similar contention applies to the effect of music, literature, and other arts. A work of art is, therefore, a complex, isolated system of relations of various types. If that is what is meant by configuration, these authorities conclude, then a work of art is merely a configuration. What they failed to comprehend is that although Gestalt implies in its concept of "whole" much more than certain relations of the parts, nevertheless, at any given time the spectator sees the whole painting as a "Gestalt" which has absorbed and superceded the individual parts and their relationships.

Richard Seddon, in his article "Two Modes of Perception and Expression Performed by Artists When Painting" gives us the second fruitful applica-

tion of Gestalt to art. He does this by describing the use of Gestalt in the creation of a work of art. According to Seddon, an artist does not merely create a Gestalt image from his sensations, contemplate that image for his own sake, and then embody it in an external medium. In fact, this image is not complete until it is expressed, for it is during this process of expressing that the image during the process of struggle assumes it final form. There are two types of artists, Seddon continues. The personality of one type contains more of the conceptual tendency of thought than of the imaginative. Such an artist, therefore, starts by paying attention to an object through a sensory experience whose sense data he "gestalts" into an image, and forming it into a concept. In his expression, he splits up this concept into minor ideas, the sum of which is the original concept. He then selects those minor concepts which suit his purpose, and places them over against each other to form a new cohesion of minor concepts. These can then be regarded as a single

new concept. In painting a tree he takes it leaf by leaf, dissecting it into its component parts, and leaves out those minor concepts which do not suit his purpose.

A second, more imaginative type of artist uses a process which Seddon calls "Angestalt." Here, the artist reacts to the sensation, "gestalts" on the imaginative (instead of conceptual) level, and then forms the concept on the rational level. He then reverses the process from conception through imagination back to crude sensation, selects what he wants from the sense data, and again "gestalts" the selected parts into an image, transferring his image to paper. This process may be repeated many times in each painting.

Seddon's theory of selection of essential parts is somewhat similar to the methods of Oriental artists who do not paint the actual appearance alone, but also the essence of the object. They do not depict *a* tree, but rather *the* tree.

The paintings of mentally deranged artists exhibit the same mixture of the reproduction of perceptual reality and also its abstracted concept — the existing plus the essential.

A final interesting application of Gestalt to art is Arnheim's clarification of the phenomenon of productive perception, that activity which allows us to understand, remember, identify, and recognize things. This can be explained by Gestalt as a grasping of basic structural features which characterize and distinguish certain things from others. There is a tendency in the organism to produce simple, balanced shapes whenever circumstances allow it to do so, and to organize sensory material under the patterns of simple, "good" *gestalten*. This also explains artistic balance, generally considered as something added by the artist to the image of the objects, but is actually one aspect of the basic effort of an organism to assimilate stimuli to its own organization. Balance is a state sought for by all physical forces whenever they interact in a field. Thus, the pleasure aroused by balance is its psychological correlate, not its cause.

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R. Seddon . . . .

This essay was written for a course in Aesthetics given by Dr. M. E. Chernowitz.

A House Divided

Nat Geller

The small "schull" on Faile Street occupied the ground floor of a two family house. For many years, its congregation had been solely composed of Lithuanian Jews. But, since the end of the war, Galetian Jewry had made an inroad into the neighborhood and most of the "Litfoxs" had moved away to the better residential sections of the city. As a result, the Poles took over the directorate of the synagogue, and with this transition of government came a Galetian rabbi and "Galitzyanish" sextons, and of course, new prayer books were bought to accommodate the change of liturgical tradition from that of Russia to the customs of Poland.

Messrs. Lipperman and Rosenblatt were of those unfortunate Lithuanians that remained as congregants. Unfortunate, because they, like the political party out of office, continually found fault with the present administration, and everything and everyone got on their nerves. Having been dispossessed from their seats in the front of the synagogue, they sat on the benches in the rear of the "schull," near the door, and viewed the situation pessimistically. What they saw represented Paradise Lost, the Iron after the Golden Age, the splendor that was once Rome; and they never let an opportunity go by without informing the Polish Jews of their sentiments.

"Look here, Rosenblatt. It's Shabboth and we barely have two minyanim. It's like I keep saying, Rosenblatt, no one comes to davin here anymore."

"Well what can you expect from them," Rosenblatt said, stroking his greying Van Dyke. "They should barely have twenty people on a Shabboth. Four, five minyanim, that's what I . . ."

"And the minyan that they do have," Lipperman interjected, "is made up of a few old Polakim and a couple of college boys who stand in the back of the schull and talk right through the whole service."

"You're right about those college boys. They talk as much as old women, and it wouldn't surprise me if the president told them to stand in the back so that they should annoy us."

"They don't let you davin a word," Lipperman said, pounding his hand on the bench for emphasis.

"Talk quieter. Their Rabbi just turned around to look at us," cautioned Rosenblatt.

"Their Rabbi? Just because he curls his sideburns and puts on a Shtraimel, does that make him a Rabbi; I know how to put on a black, fur-covered hat, also. A word he doesn't know how to learn." Lipperman was getting excited.

"What do you have to get mad for? Nothing will help."

"That's why I get mad."

"Alright. Alright. Let's davin a little. We have some catching up to do with the Chazan."

"And that's another thing; that chazan up there. He davins like he had hot beans in his mouth. The man can't say the words right. He makes an 'ooh' sound like an 'ee,' and an 'oh' like an 'ooh.' That's their Herr Aubercanter," he said synically.

"Talking about that chazan," Rosenblatt continued, "do you notice the way he runs to the 'Ahmood.' They don't even have to ask him to lead the Service, but he's up by the 'Ahmood' waiting."

"It's a sickness," Lipperman said knowingly. "Just like some people have got to have a glass of shnapps, that man has got to lead the Service. It's

a craze."

"I know," Rosenblatt agreed. And after a slight pause, "Let's not talk anymore, for awhile. I want to davin a little."

The two Lithuanians pulled their prayer shawls over their heads and began to pray. They raced through the various psalms and turned pages with great rapidity. Finally they caught up with the rest of the congregation, and they settled back in their seats to enjoy the Service. To enjoy, of course, meant to poke one another in the ribs every time the "Galitzyanisher" Cantor made what they thought to be an error in pronunciation. Not infrequently

would they look up from their prayer books and wink at one another, as if to say, "Well, what can you expect from a Polock?"

By a quarter of ten, three of the college boys came into the little "schull." There was "Red" and Josh, two Engineering students from the city; and Moishe, a Chem major from Columbia. They opened their prayers books indiscriminately, not caring to find the right page, not bothering to sit down, and began to talk.

"Say Moishe," "Red" said, "is that Chem professor of yours still living?"

"You're damn straight that son of a gun is still living."

"An ex-Yeshiva boy shouldn't curse on Shabboth." Josh teased Moishe.

"Go to hell. Listen, 'Red,' that madman gave us an open-book test that nearly killed all of us."

"What did you get?" "Red" asked.

"Lousy." Moishe answered.

"Did you flunk?" Josh queried.

"No," Moishe said flatly, "I pulled a ninety-two."

"Lousy, the man says," "Red" laughed, "I should get ninety-two's on my engineering exams."

Josh giggled, "all these Columbia men flunk unless they get a hundred."

"Go to hell," Moishe said.

"Hey 'Red'," Josh said, "did you hear what happened to Dr. Eisman in my electrical engineering lab?"

"Did he short-circuit his toy airplane motor?" Moishe asked. He had heard from Josh and "Red" that Eisman built airplane motors.

"Nah," Josh yawned, "he took a two thousand volt shock."

Moishe laughed out loud, and "Red" asked, "What happened."

"The damn charge picked him up and flung him across the room. Lucky there was no force behind the charge; otherwise we would have had one professor well done."

"Red" asked, "Isn't Eisman the guy that tells you to work with one hand in the pocket?"

"Yeah," Josh answered, "and that probably saved his life."

"How does that work?" Moishe wanted to know.

"Well, when you hit a live wire, the tendency is to reach out with your free hand to grap on to something."

"So?"

"If you happen to reach out and grab hold of some conductor, you're grounded and once you're grounded you're cooked."

"So?"

"Well, if you keep your free hand in your pocket you can't reach out with it, and if you can't reach out with it, you can't grab anything."

"That's interesting," Moishe said.

"Yeah," Josh agreed, "you should see those guys taking the advanced courses in E.E. They walk around the whole day with one hand in their pocket. It's become a habit with them."

"Red" said, "they look like they're playing pocket-pool."

All three of them laughed out loud, and a sexton walked to the back of the "schull" to try and quiet them.

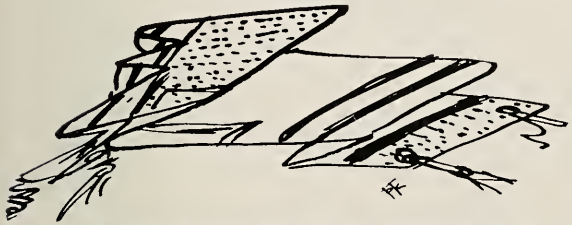
"You've been taking from the moment you came in," the old man said. "How about keeping quiet for the reading of the Torah?"

They told the sexton that they would be quiet.

"Let's go out for some air, suggested "Red."

"Maybe I ought to stay inside," said Moishe. "I haven't said a word."

"You'll daven tomorrow," Josh said. "Let's get some air."



Moishe agreed, and all three walked out of the small synagogue. They stood on the stoop of the "schull." It was cold, and they pulled up their jacket collars to keep warm.

"This is probably the last Saturday in a long time before I come to 'schull' again." Moishe said between chattering teeth.

"How's that?" Josh asked.

"My folks are going to Florida next week, and when they're gone, I won't come here."

"No such luck for me," "Red" replied. "My pop throws me out of bed every Saturday morning, and I got to go to 'Schull'."

Josh remarked seriously, "Our parents should realize that a little extra sleep is more important for guys who put in a solid week of mental labor than getting up to go to 'schull'." Josh continued, "If I stayed home, I'd probably 'daven' more too."

Inside the synagogue, they were reading from the Torah, and Messrs. Lipperman and Rosenblatt resumed their conversation.

"Rosenblatt, you're a 'Laivey' aren't you?"

"Yes."

"When was the last time they called you up to the Torah?"

"About five weeks ago."

"That's Polocks for you," Lipperman said. "They wouldn't call us up to the Torah unless they were desperate."

"I don't know. Everytime they call me up, I donate a few dollars. They have no objection to my money, I'm sure."

"Money," Lipperman repeated. "What do they know about money? Look at the condition of this schull."

"You're right, Lipperman."

"They buy the cheapest herring for 'Shalot Sudeot' and the gefilte fish is made entirely of flour."

"I've noticed that, Lipperman."

Lipperman continued, "I don't want to say this, but I'll wager you that the wine they use for Kiddush is diluted with water."

"It wouldn't surprise me," Rosenblatt grinned.

The three college boys returned to the synagogue in the middle of the "Musaf" service. "Red" was telling Moishe and Josh about a certain Williamsburg blonde with whom whe had a date that night. The boys laughed loud and frequently as "Red" gave them the "book" on the girl, and standing right behind Rosenblatt and Lipperman, the collegiates aggravated the two gentlemen.

Rosenblatt was exasperated. "Can't you boys stop talking for a few minutes?"

Moishe looked the man square in the face. "Come off it Pop," he said. "I've been keeping my eye on you 'Litfox' and you just stopped talking yourselves."

"You sheygitz," Rosenblatt roared. "Don't talk back to me."

"Take it easy, Pop," Moishe said. "All you 'Litfox' want is a good piece of 'Schmaltz' herring."

Rosenblatt's face was turning red. "This is the last time I'll ever daven here," the old man said very angrily.

"Oh stop it, 'Litfox'," Moishe said threateningly.

The boy's insolence was choking Rosenblatt. The man was getting horribly worked up, and with no thought of consequence, he spat out the most terrible invective that he knew. "You sheygitz," Rosenblatt shouted, "go sit with the Polocks up front."

"Red," Josh and Moishe laughed at Rosenblatt. The man turned to his friend, "What can you expect from a Galizyanah?" he wheezed.

"I'm hungry," said "Red." "I'm cutting out of here."

"Same here," Josh agreed.

"Let's blow," Moishe said. "This place kills me."

Veblen

Lawrence Friedlander

Thorstien Veblen was a strange, lonely man, a man whose bitterness and contempt for man alienated him from society. He was a misanthrope, a cynical disgruntled man. Yet he was the most profound observer and critic of society America has ever had.

It is a moot point whether his alienation was caused by his understanding of man's selfishness, or whether it was through this alienation that he was able to arrive at such detached an observation. Whatever that may be, and however sorry we may be with Veblen's dissatisfaction with life, we must be thankful to it for having delivered to us the full force of his genius.

Veblen's function was ever as the critic. He possessed a penetrating mind, that all-seeing eye, that pierced straight through society's every pretention. He could not be fooled by the thin layer of rationalization and conventional cant we wrap about our actions. He saw them in their stark naked primeval selfishness, and he wrote down what he saw. He was disliked by many during his life, for he told the truth, which is the bitterest pill of all.

There was never a time in American history, when the people of our country so desperately lacked a clear-eyed, realistic observer and critic. It was the period of the growth of big business, the decade that covered the last years of the 19th century. It was the time of the intrinsic rightness of all business methods, when unscrupulous, often ruthless, means were taken as a normal part of business procedure. Man worshipped success and wealth only. It was the age that had produced a Marx, and would produce a Veblen. When he did appear on the scene, his eccentrically phrased theories swept, like a clean wind, through the stuffy chambers of classical economics. However, because of the need for a careful evaluation of existing economic conditions, he failed to outline any constructive policies of his own. We now feel this failure very strongly.

In his essay, "The Intellectual Pre-Eminence of the Jews," Veblen betrays, perhaps, the secret of his intellectual independence. In the essay, he attempts to explain Jewish pre-eminence in intellectual fields as a result of their essential estrangement from society and convention. Forced from his Ghetto to the Christian world by curiosity and disbelief, the Jew finds himself in "alien corn." He is unable to accept the Western ideas he finds, for their failings and inconsistencies are evident to him. At the same time he has unwittingly, disassociated himself from his former environment. We need only substitute a few words, here and there, and we gain a sharp insight into the source of Veblen's own alienation. He was raised in a Norwegian farm community which thoroughly distrusted American institutions. As a child, he was so imbued with Norwegian religion and social practices, that when he first attended school he was forced to learn, practically anew, the English language. The sharp pressures which pulled on him from both sides, forced him to free himself from any one of them. By rejecting both the Norwegian (Old World) and the American patterns, he shook himself free from both their conventions. He thus gained for himself an airy, if uncomfortable, perch above all of them. It was this detachment that enabed him to see and write about man with a clearness, intelligence, and passion almost unequalled.

To understand Veblen, one must understand his time. He was born in an era when Darwinian evolutionism was still being argued, a haute voix, across the length and breadth of the Western world. One came across evolution in every book, magazine, pamphlet, and periodical that one glanced through. It was an essential part of the atmosphere, one not easy to escape from. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find a decisive trace of evolutionary thought, even in his early works. Veblen, however, did not study only the "modern" doctrine. He was a voracious

reader, and if he studied Spenser, he also studied Hegel, Kant and the great economists. So wide was his knowledge of the sundry and the silly, that he was called, "the last man who knows everything."

Veblem took his doctorate in philosophy. It wasn't long, however, before the young and starving professor turned to Economics. The important place psychology occupies in our world, Economics possessed in those days. It was the range, the fad. The Bohemians and "college intellectuals" of the day adopted it with relish. The equalitarian, class-conscious theories of Marx, Engels and the entire body of French Socialists and Utopians, had drifted across the ocean and caught fire in the provincial backwoods of America. Playing a prominent role in these theories was the constant struggle between the "bosses" and the "masses." All institutions of any importance, i.e. the Ministry, newspapers, legislatures, etc., were considered the handmaidens of the "bloated Capitalists." This intellectual fever could not fail to sweep young Veblen off his feet. And so, fortunately for us, Veblen turned to Economics.

Even as a student, Veblen could not exhibit much interest in the dialectical, pseudo-Hegelian materialism developed by Marx. The typically German antithesis of Capitalist and Proletariat was too cut and dry, to metaphysical and abstract for a study of people. Veblen always emphasized that people do not act on a purely idealistic level, or in conformance to any rigid economic laws. Therefore, in tracing the development of Economics, it is people's emotions, the whole range of their desires and vanities which are the deciding factors. He attacked the ago-old, classical notion that we work merely to exist, and by doing so he formed an entirely new concept of society.

When he was 42, he published, "The Theory of the Leisure Class," the first of a long line of remarkable books. The primary point of Veblen's departure is that, as an evolutionary philosopher, he refused to discuss history in terms of absolute or ideal laws. He was always speaking of people. In forming his theories, he did retain much of the current philosophies. In his hands, however, they underwent a complete metamorphosis. Society, he states, is characterized by a conflict between "exploiters" and the "exploited." This conflict is the essential fact in society. It may vary though from phase to phase, in the degree of naked force displayed by these predatory powers. Thus, the robber-baron of the Medieval Age becomes the captain of industry of our epoch. The man remains the same; he just changes his dress. The elaborateness of this structure of exploitation depends upon the fruitfulness of the process, upon its capacity to yield a surplus which will be appropriable.

What attracted many readers to Veblen, at first, was his astute dissection of contemporary mores. He contributed many terms and ideas which have since become a common part of our modern heritage. One of his most striking ideas is the principle of "pecuniary evaluation," or "keeping up with the Joneses." When wants become firmly established in social custom, they exercise a sort of tyranny over the individual consumer. The individual is not free to depart from what is considered good form and good taste. He dare not violate the imitation of the group, lest he become an outcast. The standards of fashion impose arbitrary restraints upon the consumers' freedom of choice. It is not so much the individual will which chooses as it is the social will. These codes of behavior force a pattern of uniformity upon the consumers' choice. Obedience to the canons of good form is taken as a test of sound and safe citizenship.

Also closely involved in this pecuniary emulation is the principle of "conspicuous consumption." This involves countless ways of displaying luxury and extravagance. Prestige, in our society, is obtained by ostentatious expenditures, mink coats, Cadillacs, etc. Social esteem is acquired by making a prominent show of useless luxury. The result is competition among consumers to determine who can make the most glaring and gaudy expenditure of money. Such competitive extravagance penetrates all modern standards of living. The leisure class, at the top of society, sets the pace, which is why newspapers have Society pages. Their "conspicuous indulgences" in the sports, the arts, constitute a standard envied by all other classes. The middle class seeks to emulate the fads of those higher up in the scale of spending, and even the laboring segment is prone to copy.

Each attempts to keep up with the class above it. Macy's carries twenty-dollar copies of Balman and Dior dresses. The pecuniary canons of taste filter down from rich to poor. In our society, and this remains a forceful truth, a man is known and judged by the size of his income. ("He makes ten thousand a year," or "They bought a fifty thousand dollar house," are common enough remarks. Life hasn't changed much.) This "rat-race," it should be noted, occurs more strongly in a society, like ours, where class lines are not very sharply delineated. There is no other way to establish any rigid demarcations of privileged classes. In Europe, with its rigid class lines, this need is not felt as strongly.

Veblen has also formed a sort of antithesis, or struggle, between industry, which is interested in the production of goods, and business, which concerns itself with making profit. This principle was graphically displayed in 1929 when industry's production far exceeded business' ability to sell or make a profit. Or, in the case of scientific research, it is often advantageous for business to stifle technological improvement in the production of new goods. (This point is in great debate today, and many companies are spending a great deal of money in an effort to disprove this notion.)

Veblen believes that such a system i.e. this combination of conspicuous consumption and of the struggle between industry and business, is essentially unstable and incapable of long survival. The constant recurrences of crises is a proof of an inability to adjust, which is inherent in the structure. He believes that it must eventually fall. What form succeeding economic organization will take is not completey clear from his works. However, he does vaguely suggest a system of controlled production. He is, in this

sense, an important influence in those modern circles which support a strong government control of industry. Whether he would have agreed to a form of government control, is not certain. New Dealists, however, often regard him as a "founding father."

Yet, though Veblen is known primarily as an economist, his analysis of society was a far cry from the materialistic dialectics of Karl Marx. That Veblen's first degree was in philosophy is significant. Veblen's great depth, clarity and creativity comes from the anthropological basis on which he formulated his theories. This attack on classical economics extended itself into criticism of the existing social system. From his reading in archaeology and history, he formulated an evolutionary scheme. He thus ascends from the bare level of pure economics to the loftier pinnacle of social philosophy.

As he sees it, mankind in the Western World has progressed through four main stages: the peaceful, savage economy of primitive times; the progression into a predatory barbarian economy, to which he traces the origin of such modern and related institutions as war, prosperity, masculine prowess, and his leisure; the Handicraft economy of pre-Modern times; and our own Machine Age technology. Veblen considers technology as the future saviour of man. Man, in Veblen's idea, is basically endowed with peaceful, productive tendencies, the instinct for workmanship. However, over this basic layer, certain habits and propensities accumulate. Some of the crucial ones have already been mentioned: "emulation," "conspicuous consumption," etc. It is these that force inequalities on man,. lead to the worship of prosperity, and to the glorification of war. Because man is not rational but possesses deepseated superstitions, he is led to such things as a virtual worship of wealth. But man, Veblen asserts, can overcome this by a devotion to his pure, natural and primitive sense of curiosity, i.e. sciences, technology. Thus, Veblen stresses the importance of the machine as a

force which shapes men's actions and can conceivably lead them from under the mantle of such outmoded institutions as prosperity and war.

After having dealt with Veblen as a critic, what about Veblen the revolutionary, the creator? Unfortunately, he wrote little on this topic. At the end of his life, with the advent of the Russian revolution, he expressed some sympathy with the Communists. But basically, he is very opposed to Marxian Dialectics, though he does place emphasis on the interrelationships of war and property. But their difference is more striking than their likeness. He dismisses the labor theory of value and the theory of surplus value, the keystones of scientific socialism. Veblen, being a much more astute observer of human nature, also expressed great disbelief in the supposed inevitable revolution by the "masses." He realized that the more suppressed man becomes, the more abject and submissive he is.

The poorer we are, the more we need to dream. The downtrodden can only live vicariously through the activities of the rich, and therefore there is small possibility of revolt.

Then, also, Veblen was a Darwinian evolutionist who shied away from the teleological, inevitable unfolding by history that Hegel and Marx adopted. Their difference, primarily, is a question of psychology. The subtle questioning psychology of the Freudian school which hovered in his intellectual "Zuitgust," found a place in Veblen's work, but Marx sorely lacked it.

In evaluating Veblen, we must pay eternal tribute to the genius with which he laid waste to so much that we had taken for granted. He conducted a forceful campaign to transform economics into a dynamic, evolutionary science. He distrusted and hated what we know as industry and business. Some of his writings on other social topics, such as the brilliant essay on "Christian Ethics," would be enough to grant a lesser man a niche in the Hall of Fame. But we cannot overlook his faults. He prophesied, for instance, a revolution of engineers, which we clearly see is ridiculous. His deep faith in the machine and, by extension, to their guardians, lead him perhaps to this conclusion. That faith is, however, narrow and untenable. And although we have shown differences between him and Marx, they both agree on the prime importance of economics. In assigning such a dynamism to economy and economics alone, they both err, for man and society are not that simple.

And what were Veblen's hopes for the future? Is the New Deal, as so many claim, an outcome of his ideas? He does not say and we can but guess. During his lifetime, Veblen found few readers who could understand him, and even fewer disciples. His work was constantly in danger of being misinterpreted. However, today his ideas and terminology are gradually and effectively transforming many areas of social thought. Who can tell what would happen if Veblen would have lived fifty years later.

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